The Emergence of Shi'ism and the Shi'ites

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بسم الله الرحمن الرحیم

The Emergence of Shi'ism and the Shi'ites

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Contents

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The relation between the ideological and the theological realms in Islam. Theories of the Caliphate and the Imamate in Islam and the historical development of Shi'ism as a .distinct school of Islamic thought

Preface

In The Name of Allah the All Merciful

Imam Ali Foundation has published books and book translations of high quality concerning many subjects, especially regarding a wider understanding of Islam both .in its dogmatic and legal aspects

Dear Reader, the book which you have in your hands treats a most important topic regarding the relation between the ideological and the theological realms in Islam. It concerns theories of the Caliphate and the Imamate in Islam and especially the historical development of Shi'ism, which insists upon a strict observance of Koranic .and prophetic texts in everyday life

The first text represents the inspired thought of the martyr Sayyed Mohammad Baqir As-Sadr, who was highly reputed for the intellectual quality, scientific value and

objectivity of his works. Dr. Abdul Jabbar Chararah has been given the great distinction, and privilege, to annotate this work and to present it here, in order to facilitate its access to the public.

Imam Ali Foundation

Foreword

The Author and the Book

Imam Sayyid Muhammad Baqir al-Sadr, the author of this study, was a reverent scholar and one of the most eminent jurists of our time. He struggled diligently

in the way of God; his devotion to Islam was complete to the point of martyrdom, .which he finally attained in ١٩٧٩

An endless source of learnedness, his genuine gift, he was unrivaled in the study of legal principles and jurisprudence. Imam al Sadr was a rare mind in the area of logic and the logic of inquiry, and sought to renew Islamic thought in the face of contemporary intellectual challenges in philosophy, economy and sociology. By setting forth his theses, observations and positions, he helped to establish firmly the Islamic School. He refurbished theological studies, enriched knowledge of the Qur'an and secured the pillars of a sober scientific method in every subject he took up .through his pen

In the probing study of Shi'ism before us, Imam al-Sadr brought to bear a sedate, scholarly method supported by that impeccable logic for which he is so well known. At every step, he has the depth of a skilled expert who knows from the very outset how to take the reader wherever true logic dictates. He handled this weighty subject with concision in a way unmatched by anyone, thanks to his strength of argument, compactness, evenness and subtlety of expression, to say nothing of the sheer .elegance of his presentation

This, despite the number of points and allusions made. These may be perfectly comprehensible to cultured or attained persons, but less so to those inexperienced in this kind of extended theological inquiry. The allusions are not easily understood by those uninitiated in the

area of debate and argumentation, or who have never before had to deal with either .Prophetic traditions (hadi`ths) or historical events

In view of the significance of the subject matter, style and treatment, it is regrettable that this study has not received the attention it deserves. Nor has it been properly edited and commented on, for proper guidance through all the evidence invoked. We have yet to be enlightened on its references or the context of its arguments - which should reveal to the reader the soundness of the logic and leave him or her .reassured, in turn, as to the logic of their soundness

This study was originally written in Baghdad in ۱۹۷۰ AD/۱۳۹۰ AH as a preface to a book by Dr. `Abdullah Fayyad entitled History of the Imamites and Their Shi'ite Predecessors, and published in Baghdad by Matba`at As`ad. The first independent edition was published in Cairo in ۱۹۷۷ AD/۱۳۹۷ AH, under the supervision of Mr. Talib al-Husaym al-Rifai.(۱) In the same year, but just earlier, it was also published in Beirut by .Dar al-Ta`aruf lil-Matbu`at

These two editions, however, have failed to measure up to their goal, since there was little effort to edit or accurately to determine the text. Neither are the Prophetic traditions expounded nor the texts properly supported, to say nothing of the many .printing errors

Nevertheless, the Cairo edition is provided with Mr. al-Rifais helpful comments; it is also the more precise of the two, having fewer errors. The two editions have different titles

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۱- By Dar Ahl al-Bayt, Matabi` al-Dajawi, Abidin.

the Cairo going by Shi'ism, an Authentic Phenomenon Within the Call of Islam,(1) the - (Beirut by A Study Concerning Guardianship.(2)

The result was that there arose a need for this study to be given the attention it rightly deserved in terms of textual editing, exactness and commentary. I have made every effort to determine the precise expressions by benefiting from the editions just mentioned, with a view to the necessary corrections. As to the title, I have heeded the view of the eminent Ayatullah al-Sayyid Mahmud al-Hashimi, who suggested to me .that it be The Emergence of Shi'ism and the Shi'ites. It was the most appropriate one

Finally, I have seen it fit to append another scholarly study, adhering to the very same sober method he used, to this solid research by the late Imam al-Sadr. I hope to analyze something to which he pointed without much elaboration, instead relying on its obvious sense on the assumption that it has been related by several transmitters and handed down through many biographical works: namely, the intellectual and moral preparation for Imam `Ali's spiritual leadership (imamah) and political .succession (khilafah) to the Prophet

Concerning the Present Edition

First of all, only printed copies, together with the preface in the introductory section of Dr. `Abdullah Fayyad's History of the Imamites and Their Shi'ite Predecessors, have been available to me. But since the Cairo copy that came out under Mr. Talib al-Husayni al-Rifai's supervision is the better and more accurate one, I have basically relied on it. In order to

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۱- Al-Tashayyu zahirah tabi'iyyah fi itar al-da'wah al-islamiyyah

۲- Bahth hawl al-walayah.

determine the text and to rectify the errors and whatever seems doubtful, I have referred to the other two editions, that of Beirut and that of Baghdad (the one .(included in the introduction to Dr. Fayyad's book

Secondly, I have devised a new layout for the study; it is now divided into an introduction and two chapters. The first chapter is entitled "What is the origin of Shi'ism?" - exactly as the author wished by way of presentation. I broke it up into three discussions. The first deals with what the title it carries says, "The First Path - Denial," that is, "Neglecting the Succession." This title appears in the Cairo edition. The Second Discussion deals with the path of affirmation, epitomized by the consultative system. The Third Discussion presents the affirmative path, exemplified by the preparation and investiture of whomever was to lead the Ummah, or the community. The second chapter is called "How did the Shiites become Shiite?" It, too, is divided into three discussions. The first is concerned with the two principal trends that accompanied the development of the Ummah; the second with intellectual authority .and guidance; and the third with the issue of spiritual and political Shi`ism

Thirdly, I have consulted those references given by Imam al-Sadr, and have been able to establish the specific texts he relied on. I have, therefore, indicated the volume of the Tradition source left out, along with the page numbers. All told, twenty-three "references were given. I have attached the word "Imam

to them, thereby retaining the original text written in the notes and distinguishing .them from my own comments

Fourthly, with respect to those texts which Imam al-Sadr does quote or refer to, I have sought to provide the source, based on the information he gives. I have also .made available the references to the ayat of the Qur'an and to the Prophetic hadiths

Fifthly, wherever needed, I have documented the views and ideas evoked by the .Imam

Sixthly, in order to clarify the objects of discussion, or to reinforce through evidence .and proof, I have in many cases made the appropriate comments

I implore God to render pure this work before Him. Praise be to God, Lord of the .World

Editor

Dr. Abd al Jabbar Sharrarah

Introduction

Some scholars who study Shi`ism describe it as a phenomenon that is incidental to Islamic society. They observe the Shi segment within the body of the Islamic community precisely in its quality of a segment, one that first came into being, through the passage of time, as a result of specific societal events and developments, leading to the intellectual and doctrinal formation of one part only within the larger body; a part which gradually broadened later.(۱) Beyond this assumption, these scholars differ as to the particular events and developments that led to the rise of .such a phenomenon

Some assume that `Abd Allah b. Saba'(۲) and his alleged political activity were at the origin of the rise of the Shi`ite bloc. Others trace the phenomenon of Shi`ism back to the

See Dr. Kamil Mustafa al-Shaybi, al-Silah bayna al-tasawwuf wal-tashajyu; I:۱۱-۱۴, -۱ where he presents the views of many ancient and contemporary investigators into the origin and evolution of Shi'ism. He also states that some of them differentiate between political and spiritual (i.e. doctrinal) Shi`ism. See Dr. Mustafa al-Shak`ah, Islam bila madhahib, p. ۱۵۳; and Dr. Diya' al-Din al-Rayyis, al-Nazariyyat al-siyasiyyah .al islamiyyah, p. ۶۹

See Dr. Mahmud Jabir `Abd al-`Al, Harakat al-Shi`ah al-mutatarrafin ma - ۲ atharuhum fi al-hayat al-ijtimiyyah, p. ۱۹. This claim is ascribed to some Muslim historians. However, al-`Al points out that this was rejected by Bernard Lewis, the well-known Orientalist. Wellhausen and Friedlander, two of the biggest scholars in the field, are quoted as saying, "Ibn Saba' was fabricated by those who came later in time." Dr. Taha Husayn, in his al-Fitnah al-kubra, II:۳۲۷, says: "The Shiites' opponents exaggerated the issue of Ibn Saba' in order to defame Ali and his followers." He added that `We find no mention of Ibn Saba' in any of the important sources ...He is not mentioned in Baladhuris Ansab al-ashraf, but is in Tabari's Tarikh, as reported by Sayf b. `Umar al-Tamimi About this Sayf, though, Ibn Hayyan said that "He related forgeries and was said to fabricate hadiths himself." Al-Hakim stated that he was accused of heresy, and that his hadiths were omitted. See Ibn Hajar, Tadhhib al-tadhbib IV:۲۶۰. Concerning the legend of `Abd Allah b. Saba, see `Allamah Murtadha .'al`Askari's book, `Abd Allah b. Saba

era of Imam `Ali's Caliphate and whatever political and social circumstances had taken shape within the pale of events of the time. Still others claim that, within the historical sequence of the Islamic community, the appearance of the Shi`ites occurred through still later events than these.(١)

As far as I can tell, what has prompted many of these scholars to believe that Shi`ism was a phenomenon merely incidental to Islamic society is precisely that the Shiites of early Islam represented but a tiny portion of the Ummah. This fact may have inspired the feeling that what was not Shi`i must have then been the predominant pattern in Islamic society, and that Shi'ism was the exception, an accidental phenomenon whose causes can be discovered through developments relating to the opposition to the dominant order.

But to consider either numerical majority or relative minority as grounds enough for distinguishing the dominant order from the exception, or the original root from the schism, lacks logical rigour. It is incorrect to describe "non-Shi'ism" as dominant simply on the basis of a numerical majority; and, based on numerical inferiority, to relegate "Shi'ism" to an incidental phenomenon and the idea of schism.

That would not agree with the nature of creedal divisions, since many divisions can remain within the fold of a single message and arise only through the differences attending the process of defining certain of the message's features. No two credal divisions ever have numerical equivalence, although both sides may at bottom be seeking to express

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١ - See al-Shaybi al-Silah bayna al-tasawwuf wal-tashayyu; Dr. `Abd Allah Fayyad, Ta'rikh al-Imamiyyah wa aslafihim min al-Shi'ah; Dr. Mustafa al-Shakah, Islam bila madhahib, p. ١٥٢ff; Dr. Diya' al-Din al-Rayyis, al Nazarijyat al-siyasiyyah al-islamiyyah, p. ٧٢ff.

.the same message on whose nature they disagree

Hence, under no circumstances can we build our conception upon a creedal division between Shi'ism and other currents within the Islamic Mission(١) based on numbers alone; just as we may not link the birth of the Shi'i thesis, as it occurs within the framework of the Islamic Mission, with the advent of the word “Shi'ites” or “Shi'ism” taken as a technical term or proper noun for a clearly defined group among the Muslims. This is because the advent of names and technical terms is one thing, and the development of the content, the actual current and the thesis are another. If we cannot find the word “Shiites”(٢) in current usage at the time of God's Messenger, or immediately following his death, this does not mean that the Shiite current and thesis .did not exist

With this frame of mind, then, let us turn to the issue of “Shi`ism” and “Shi`ites” in :order to answer the following two questions

?What is the origin of Shi'ism

?How did the Shi'ites emerge

Part ١:The Emergence of Shi'ism

Preliminary Remarks

With respect to the first question – “What is the origin of Shi`ism?” –one may safely regard Shi'ism as a consequence that is natural to Islam, representing a thesis whose realization is imperative for the Call (or Mission of Islam(٣)) if the latter's sound .progress is to be assured

It is possible for us logically to infer this thesis from the Call of Islam, led by the Prophet, because its formation was natural and due to particular

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١ – Indeed, it is consistent neither with ordinary logic nor with the logic of the Holy Qur'an. In numerous places, the Qur'an mostly, if not always, censures the majority,

and praises the few in as many places. For instance, God says: “And yet most are not wont to be thankful…” (Qur'an ٢٧:٧٣ “al-Naml”). God also says: “… but a few of my servants are grateful” (٣٤:١٣ “al-Saba”); “…and many people are sinful” (٥:٥٢ “al … Maidah”)…Those are they who are brought near in the Gardens of Delight, a party from those of old and a few from those who have come later” (٥٦:١١-٤ “al-waqiah”). This is one aspect. The other is that the Holy Qur'an informs us in many places that those who adhere to Truth and to God's Messengers, and are directed by Divine teachings, are always fewer in comparison to those who headstrongly resist the truth. God says: “Most of them dislike the truth…” (٢٣:٧٠ “al-Mu'minun”); “Yet no faith will the greater part of mankind have, however ardently thou dost desire it” (١٢:١٠٣ “Yusuf”). In every case, there is allusion to the invalidity of relying on the standards of the majority in order to evaluate the correctness of a trend or an opinion. See Muhammad .Fuad `Abd al-Baqi, al-Mujam al-mufahris li-alfaz al-Qur'an, p. ٥٩٧ff

It appears that the Imam is proffering this by way of humbleness and tolerance; -٢ otherwise there are prophetic hadiths which utter the word “Shi'ism” in connection with `Ali. It is said in Ibn Manzur's Mukhtasar Tar'ikh Ibn Asaki'r (XVII:٣٨٤) that `Ali uttered: “The Prophet told me [May God bless him and his Household [you and your followers [shiatuka] are in the Garden of Paradise.” But there is another account by Jabir (XVIII:١۴). Cf. Ibn al-Athir, al-Nihayah IV:١٠۶ (“Madat qamh”): “You and your .followers [shiatuka] will be pleased and pleasing…” - addressed to `Ali

These two terms, “Call” and “Mission” of Islam, are used interchangeably in this -٣ .translation - Translator

circumstances. The Prophet had put into practice a revolutionary leadership, and drove for a comprehensive change of society, its conventions, structures and ideas. But the road to such a change was not to be a short one. It was long, extending the length of that deep spiritual chasm separating pre-Islam from Islam. The calling pursued by the Prophet had to begin with the man of pre-Islam in order to create a new being out of him; it was from the pre-Islamic world that the man of Islam would issue, carrying the new light to the rest of the world. This Mission had to extirpate every last root and vestige in him of pre-Islam.(١)

Within a short period of time, this remarkable leader was able to make quite amazing progress in the drive for change. But this drive had also to continue its lengthy path even after his death. The Prophet had known for some time that his term was nearing an end. He openly announced it at the "Farewell Pilgrimage."(٢) Death hardly took him by surprise. That means that he had ample opportunity to ponder the fate of the Mission beyond his lifetime, even if we disregard the element of a liaison with the hidden world, or for that matter the direct Grace of God evinced by the Message revealed to him.(٣)

In the light of this, we may note that the Prophet had before him three possible paths to choose from with respect to the future. First, the path of denial;

١- The Qur'an affirms that "He is the one who sends down to His servants the clear signs, that He may bring ye out of the veils of darkness and unto the Light" (٥٧:٩ "al-Had").

٢- This was done at the formal address of the Farewell Pilgrimage, where he declared: "I am about to be summoned forth, and am about to reply." And in another account: "It is as if I am being summoned forth and am answering. Verily, I leave thee two weighty things..." (Sahih Muslim, IV۴:۱۸۷۴). `Abd Allah b. Mas`ud, is reported as saying, `We were with the Prophet [May God Bless him and his household] one night, when he sighed. So, I asked him, `What ails you, O Messenger of God?' He said: `My death has been announced to me"' (Mukhtasar Ta'r'ikh Ibn Asakir XVIII:۳۲).

That is, if we suppose the Prophet to have been so keen to have his blessed calling -٣ go the full length set for it - as indeed it was his nature to be - and to have striven to take it to the rest of the world, it could only be that he took it upon himself to reckon .the future

second, the affirmative path (for example, consultation); third, appointment.(1) These .will constitute the three discussions to be taken up below

The First Discussion: Denial, Neglecting the Question of Succession

point

(2)

Based on such an attitude, the Prophet would have assumed a stance of denial with respect to the Mission of Islam, being content to pursue his own leadership role and to direct the Mission only while he lived. He would thus have abandoned it to circumstance and chance. But such a position of denial cannot be assumed for the Prophet, because it would have to arise from one of two issues that fail to apply to .him

First Issue

This consists of the belief denial and neglect cannot affect the fate of the Mission, and that the Ummah that would soon inherit the Call of Islam was capable enough to .assume the responsibility of protecting it and ensuring against its distortion

In fact, this belief has absolutely no basis. Rather, the pattern of events was such as to point to something else. This is because the Call - being from the outset a mission for revolutionary change aimed at constructing an Ummah and at eradicating every root of pre-Islam from it - would become exposed to the worst dangers if the stage were suddenly voided of its leader, or abandoned by him without any pre-.arrangements

Firstly, there are the inherent dangers engendered by trying to confront this vacuum without any advance planning, and by the urgent need to take a makeshift position .while still under the massive shock of having lost the Prophet

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١- That is, of a successor - Translator.

٢- The titles given to the three discussions in both the first and the second chapters were construed from Imam Sadr's own statements, but are not part of the original text.

the Messenger had abandoned the stage without planning the course of the Islamic Mission, the Ummah would for the first time have faced the responsibility of managing the most serious problems of its mission without a leader but brandishing not the slightest prescription. The situation called for immediate and swift application - despite the gravity of the underlying problem - because a vacuum cannot persist.(١)

Indeed, a hasty measure was taken at a moment of shock for the Ummah, reeling as it was from the loss of its leader. This was the shock which, by its very nature, was to upset the course of thinking in Islam, leaving it in such disarray that its effects induced a well-known Companion to announce that the Prophet neither has nor will die.(٢) But such a measure could not but entail danger, with the most undesirable consequences.

Second are the dangers emanating from a message that is not consummated at a level that could allow the Prophet to be certain of anticipating the actual procedures soon to be taken, and to keep within the fold of the Islamic Call. That would not have enabled him to prevail over latent dissensions that continued to survive in crevices deep inside the hearts of the Muslims, which dissensions were based on the divisions between the Muhajirun (those who migrated to the City of Medina) and the Ansar (native Medinans); the Quraysh and the rest of the Arab tribes; Mecca and Medina.(٣)

Third, there axe dangers arising from that segment

١- It is well recognized that a head of state's empty seat engendered countless perils and dangers, particularly in the absence of clearly stipulated constitutional provisions for quickly filling the vacancy. See Dr. al-Rayyis, al Nazarijyat al-siyasiyyah al-islamiyyah, p. ١٣۴.

٢- See al-Shahrastani, al-Milal wal-nihal I:١۵, where he states: `Umar b. al-Khattab: 'Whosever says that Muhammad has died I shall slay with this mine own sword. He has ascended to Heaven."' Cf. Muhammad b. Jarir al-Tabari, Ta'rikh al-Tabari II:٢٣٣: "He said that Muhammad indeed did not die and that he would go over to the one spread rumour of his death and cut off his hands and smite him at the neck..."

On this state of affairs, there is no lack of evidence. For example, al-Bukhari, - ٣ Muslim and al-Tirmidhi (in Kitab al-tafsir) recount, on the authority of Jabir b.`Abdullah: "We were on an expedition, when a Muhajir struck someone from the Ansar. The Ansari called out, `O Ansar [help me]!' while the Muhajirun called out, `O Muhajirin [help me]!' The Prophet heard all this and said `What pagan cry is this?' Ibn Sallul was also heard saying. `They have done it. By God if we return to Medina the .(stronger will drive out the weaker"' (al-Shaykh al-Nasif, al Tajj -al jami li١-usul ١V:٢۶٣

of society which passes under the cover of Islam; but against which it used to conspire during the Prophet's lifetime. This is the group that the Qur'an collectively calls the "Hypocrites."(۱)

If we add to them a good number of those who embraced Islam after the taking of Mecca, who were more resigned to the new order of things than open to truth as such, we can then assess the threat posed as all these elements seized their opportunity for a broad initiative, doing so just when - the stage being cleared of the leader as the custodian - a large vacuum had existed.(۲) Hence, the gravity of the situation after his departure was not something that could have been hidden from any leader seasoned in doctrinal matters, let alone the Seal of the Prophets.(۳)

It might well be true that Abu Bakr, moreover, had no intention of leaving the scene without a positive intervention ensuring the future of political authority, on the argument that there was need of precaution under the circumstances.(۴) It may also be true that people rushed to `Umar, when he was wounded, imploring him: "O Commander of the Faithful, if you would only nominate someone."(۵)

This was done out of fear of the vacuum that the Caliph would soon leave behind, notwithstanding the political and social solidity which the Islamic Mission had attained a decade after the passing away of the Prophet. Also, `Umar may well have named six persons(۶) in his will in deference to the

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۱ - During the Prophet's lifetime, the "Hypocrites" as a group sought to play a menacing role through plots against Islam, the Messenger of God himself and the Muslims. See the previous note, for instance, for the statement by Ibn Sallul, who headed the "Hypocrites." They happened to stir up all manner of falsehoods and to disseminate disruptive rumours, as in the Battles of Uhud and Ahzab. Consequently, God revealed the "Surah of the Hypocrites" in the Qur'an, in which He exposed this malicious group, informing His Messenger of their designs and whatever they sought to hide. See, for example, al-Fakhr al-Razi's Tafsi'r First ed.VIII:۱۵۷ (Cairo: al...

Khayriyyah,۱۳۰۸ AH); al-Zamakhshari al-Kahshaf IV:۸۱۱

۲- During the Prophet's lifetime, the “Hypocrites” as a group sought to play a menacing role through plots against Islam, the Messenger of God himself and the Muslims. See the previous note, for instance, for the statement by Ibn Sallul, who headed the “Hypocrites.” They happened to stir up all manner of falsehoods and to disseminate disruptive rumours, as in the Battles of Uhud and Ahzab. Consequently, God revealed the “Surah of the Hypocrites” in the Qur'an, in which He exposed this malicious group, informing His Messenger of their designs and whatever they sought to hide. See, for example, al-Fakhr al-Razi's Tafsi'r First ed.VIII:۱۵۷ (Cairo: al-Khayriyyah,۱۳۰۸ AH); al-Zamakhshari al-Kahshaf IV:۸۱۱

۳- Ibid.

۴- Regarding the story of Abu Bakr's appointment of `Umar b. al-Khattab as his successor, there are the following words uttered by Abu Bakr: “If you have accepted my command while I live, it would be unbecoming that you should differ after me...” (Mukhtasar Ta'rikh Ibn Asakir XVIII:۳۰۸-۰۹); Ta'rikh al-Tabari II:۲۴۵, ۲۸۰.

۵- Imam. Ibn Manzur, Mukhtasar Tarikh Ibn Asakir XVIII:۳۱۲ - Ta'rikh al-Tabari II:۵۸۰.

۶- Imam - Tarikh al-Tabari II:۵۸۱

latter's presentiment of danger. He must have seen the depth of this perilous situation on the Day of the Saqifah and what Abu Bakr's Caliphate would bring in its train, in view of its doubly improvised appearance, since he declared that "Abu Bakr's oath-taking was an oversight from whose evil God has shielded us."(۱)

Abu Bakr himself regretted his hasty acceptance to become the sovereign as he bore the heavy responsibility that went with it, in that he became aware of the seriousness of the situation and the need to venture some quick solution. When he was censured for accepting to be sovereign, his words were: "God's Messenger has died, and the people only recently were in a state of faithless ignorance. I took alarm that they might be beguiled, but my companions charged me with the task."(۲)

If all of the above is valid,(۳) at any rate, it stands to reason that the Prophet and exemplar of the Call to Islam would have been the most aware of the danger of denial,(۴) most perceptive and farsighted in his understanding of the nature of the situation and the exigencies of the change he pursued in an Ummah newly emerging from faithless ignorance, in the words of Abu Bakr.(۵)

Second Issue

The second issue which could explain why the leader would have disavowed the fate of the Mission, or its progress, after his death goes as follows. Despite his awareness of the danger of the situation, he did not attempt to fortify the Mission of

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۱- Tarikh al-Tabari, ed Muhammad Abu al-Fadl Ibrahim II:۲۰۵; ibid, II:۵۸۱.

۲- Ibn Abi al-Hadid, Sharh Nahj al-balaghah, ed. Abu al-Fadl Ibrahirn II:۴۲ - Imam. Tarikh al-Tabari II:۳۵۳. Abu Bakr said: "Would that I had not accepted it..."

۳- `Umar wished the deliberations would have ended and a Caliph selected before his wounding, so that he might die a tranquil death knowing that Islam would progress after him..." (Dr. Muhammad Husayn Haykal, al-Faruq `Umar II:۳۱۳-۳۱۴).

۴- The Prophet Muhammad, during his blessed calling, earnestly desired for the unity of the Ummah and the progress of Islam, no doubtless more intensely than any of his

Companions. For God has declared: "...a beloved friend taking to heart that ye should suffer adversity, ardently concerned for you, and to the, faithful most kind, compassionate" (Qur'aan, ٩:١٢٨ "al-Tawbah"). What is important is that his concern for the Ummah, his teaching of the Companions the necessary avoidance of discord, and his practical experience in this hardly need proof, especially as the Qur'an is replete with tens of ayat calling for the repudiation of all dissension, its causes and motives. How can one then imagine that this compassionate Prophet could have passed over the chief cause of strife (namely, the question of leadership) without setting up what is likely to obstruct and to bar its baleful effects; the more so that this same perception impelled the first and second Caliphs themselves to appoint successors, as is clear. Cf. Tarikh al-Tabari II:٥٨٠.

٥- Ibid.

Islam against this danger, supposedly because he was mindful of the advantages. And so, his only concern was to protect the Mission while he lived in order to benefit .from it and to enjoy the gains, caring little to secure its fate beyond his own lifetime

This explanation cannot hold true for the Prophet, even if we should refuse to describe him as a Prophet dedicated to God through everything connected to the Message, making him out instead to be a leader with a message no different from any other. Yet, in the entire history of message-bearing leaders no one matches Muhammad in his earnestness toward the Call or, to his last breath, in his devoted sacrifice for its furtherance. His whole life proves it. Even as he lay on his deathbed, his illness worsening, he was concerned about a battle he had earlier planned. Preparing to deploy Usamah's forces, he repeated: "Make ready the army of Usamah, send it forth, send off Usamah!" as he fainted now and then.(۱)

If the Prophet's attentiveness toward a single problem of military interest relating to the Call could go to that length, as he slowly expired on his deathbed; if knowing that he will die before plucking the fruit of victory did not prevent him from tending to the battle; in short, if he could maintain active interest while drawing his last few breaths of life - how, then, could one possibly think that the Prophet did not lived through moments of anxiety over

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۱- Ibn al-Athir, Ta'rikh al-Kamil II:۳۱۸ - Imam. See also Ibn Sad, al-Tabaqat al kubra .II:۲۴۹

the fate of the Call? How could he not have planned for its welfare in the face of ?anticipated dangers

Finally, there is one record in the Prophet's life, during his last illness, which is sufficient to refute the entire case for the "first path." It shows that nothing was more remote for such an outstanding leader as our Prophet Muhammad than to assume the position of denial with respect to the future of the Call, simply because of a lack of .sensitivity to the dangers or to a disinterest in its nature

This record, upon whose line of transmission all fair-minded Muslims - whether Sunni or Shi'i -without exception agree upon, is as follows. With certain men present in the house where he was about to face death, including `Umar b. al Khattab, the Prophet made a request: "Bring me the inkwell and tablet(۱) that I may write you an epistle. After this you shall never stray."(۲)

This attempt by the leader - the soundness and authoritative transmission of whose account, once again, is roundly accepted - points unequivocally to the fact that he did reflect on the future. He saw clearly the necessity to provide a plan by which the Ummah can be fortified against deviation and the Mission of Islam protected from .dissolution or ruin

.Hence, it is not possible to presuppose a position of denial(۳) for the Prophet

The Second Discussion: The Affirmative Path Represented by the Consultative Order

point

The second path consists in the hypothesis that the Prophet had mapped out the future of the Islamic Mission

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۱- Literally, a "shoulder blade," on which important documents used to be written. It must be recalled that this was the period just before the Muslims had introduced a .new paper substance as a mass commodity, for the first time in history - Translator

Sahih al-Bukhari I:۳۷; Kitab al-`ilm ۸:۱۶۱; Kitab al-i'tisam. See also Sahih Muslim V:۷۶ -۲ (Ch. "al-Wasiyyah") (Cairo: Matba`at Muhammad 'Ali Sabih); Musnad al-Imam Ahmad .I:۳۵۵; cf Ibn Sa'd, al-Tabaqat al-kubra II:۲۴۲-۴۴ - Imam

Every Muslim believes in the preeminence of the Messenger's personality as a - ۳ leader, let alone as a Prophet-Messenger, which discounts unconditionally the presupposition stated above. Indeed, the Muslim usually holds such a presupposition to be illegitimate with respect to the Prophet for at least two reasons. One, it would be contrary to the Prophet's familiar life-conduct unanimously acknowledged by the entire community. His noble life abounds with goodly works and continuous struggle for change, construction and salvation of the Ummah. Second, the presupposition runs contrary both to those hadiths which have numerous, uninterrupted lines of transmission and to what he taught the Ummah with respect to diligence - indeed, to the point of declaring: "Whosever wakes without a care for the affairs of the Muslims is not one of them" (Usul al-kafi II:۱۳۱). His disinterest in the fate of the Call and of the .Ummah would have actually make him derelict in his obligations and trustworthiness

after his death, adopting an affirmative stance by establishing a custodianship and an experienced leadership for the Ummah based on a consultative order, where the first, doctrinally-steeped generation would bring together both Muhajirin and Ansar. Representing the Ummah, this is the generation that was to constitute the base for .political authority and the mainstay for the leadership of the Mission as it expanded

It should be noted, however, that the situation which generally prevailed for the Prophet, including the Mission and those who promoted it, was not conducive to this course. In fact, it tends to contradict such a hypothesis. That he held the mission's leadership which came immediately after him to a system of consultation operated by the Ummah's first generation of Muhajiran and Ansar, or ever opted for such a .course, is highly questionable. Here are some points of clarification

First Issue

Had the Prophet adopted an affirmative position towards the future of the Mission that envisaged setting up straightaway a system of consultation to be emulated after his death, with the Mission's command resting on a leadership emanating directly from such a system, the most obvious thing would have been for him to take measures to apprise the Ummah and those actively engaged in its cause of some system of consultation, its limits and particulars. He would have informed them about its religious and sacred character, or prepared the community intellectually and spiritually in order for it to accept such a system, it being a community which .originated partly among clans

For before Islam, the Ummah did not live by political consultation, but rather by an arbitrary tribal and clan system based on domination through power, wealth and (hereditary relations.(١

It is obvious that the Prophet did not seek to give advice on a consultative system, whether in respect of its legal particulars or its intellectual concepts. Naturally, if this were ever undertaken, it would have been reflected in the hadiths handed down from the Prophet. It would certainly have been reflected in the minds of people - at least the Ummah's first generation comprised of both Muhajirin and Ansar whose responsibility it should have been to apply such a system of consultation. But we simply do not find any legal notion in the hadiths of the Prophet delimiting any such order.(٢) There are no particular traits within the mentality of the Ummah, or that of .the first generation, that specifically reflect such advice

Actually, the early generation contained two currents. The first was the one led by the members of the Prophet's Household; the other expressed itself at the Saqifah and in the Caliphate that emerged after the passing of the Prophet. Clearly, the former meant belief in Guardianship (wisayah) and the Imamate(٣), along with an emphasis on close kinship to the Prophet; and none of that reflected any belief in the idea of (consultation.(۴

Regarding the second tendency, all the records and the evidence concerned with the: Prophet's actual practice yield a picture which leaves little doubt that he did not believe

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Dr. `Abd al-`Aziz al-Duri, al Nuzum al-islamiyyah (Baghdad: Matba'at Najib, ١٩۵٠), p. -١ .٧; Dr. Subhi al-Salih, al Nuzum al-islamiyyah (Dar al--`Ilm lil-Malayin,١٩۶۵), p. ۵٠

In his book al-Nazariyyat al-siyasiyyah al-islamiyyah, Dr. Dia' al-Din al-Rayyis has -٢ acknowledged that the Caliphate in that form upon which rests the consultative order has no basis in the hadiths. Rather, it was based on a consensus among the Prophet's Companions, or Sahabah, on the grounds that it was predominant (p. ١٠۶, in a note in

response to Arnold). This becomes clearer upon his response to and debate with Dr. 'Ali `Abd al-Razzaq, in al-Islam wa usul al-hukm, as the latter denies the existence of any contemporaneous legal text which could have benefited the system of politics and government. However, Dr. al-Rayyis answers by arguing on the basis of the actual practice of the Righteous Caliphs (al-khulafa al-rashidin). Their deeds are of decisive legal value in Islam (p. ١۴٨-۴۵). See the reliable and exhaustive discussion on the text that is alleged to deal with "consultation" in `Allamah al-Sayyid Kazim al-Ha'iri, Asas al-hukumah al-islamiyyah (Beirut: Matba`at al-Nil, ١٣٩٩ AH), p. ٨١ ff.

٣- That is, leadership of the Imam.

۴- Imam 'Ali disavowed the idea of consultation and the recourse to it by those who attended the Conference of Saqifah, where Abu Bakr had used the pretext of his closeness to the Prophet. See the "Shaqshaqiyyah Address" and, in particular, `Ali words, "What a consultation!..." (Nahj al-Balaghah. Sharh al-Imam Muhammad Abduh I:٣٠, ٣۴).

in the system of consultation (as suggested); nor did he build a practical policy based on it. The same attitude is found among other groups within that generation of Muslims which witnessed the death of the Prophet.(۱) This is supported by the fact that Abu Bakr, his physical state worsening, inaugurated `Umar b. al-Khattab and :ordered `Uthman to record the oath. He wrote

In the Name of God the Merciful and Compassionate. That is what Abu Bakr, Successor of God's Messenger, has obligated the Faithful and the Muslims with. Peace be with you. To God I give praise before thee. Thereupon, I place `Umar b. al-Khattab (at your service. So hearken and obey!(۲

Abd al-Rahman b. `Awf then interjected, saying, "And what becometh of you, O` Successor of God's Messenger." To which he replied, "I am to depart. But you have increased my torment: as you watch me deposit this trust upon someone from your midst, each of you scowls, demanding all to himself..."(۳) It is clear, from this succession and the disapproval of the opposition, that the Caliph was not thinking in the spirit of any system of consultation. He took it as his right to designate a successor, and to expect compliance with this designation from the Muslims. This is why he commanded them "to hear and to obey."(۴) It was not a question of presenting .or announcing a candidate, but one of investiture and obligation

.Umar, in turn, found it within his right to impose a successor upon the Muslims`

Note the discussions and arguments that took place on the Day of Saqiqah, as - ۱ there was no mention, either explicit or implicit, of "consultation." What did arise was quite different, including the thesis of "One Amir from us, one from you." Abu Bakr, and after him `Umar b. al-Khattab, rejected this idea, which the latter hastened to lay to rest by taking Abu Bakr's hand and saying: "Open thy hand that I may swear thee in..." For texts relating to the Saqfah, see Tarikh al-Tabari (Dar al-Turath) II:۲۳۴ff, esp. .p. ۲۰۳; also Ibn Abi al-Hadid, Sharh al-Nahj, ed. Abu al-Fadl Ibrahim VI:۶-۹

.Ibn Manzur, Mukhtasar Tarikh Damashq XV III:۳۱۰; Tarikh al-Tabari' II:۳۵۲ -۲

Ta'rirkh al-Yaqubi II:۱۲۶ (Tab'at al-Najaf al-Haydariyyah) -Imam. Cf. Mukhtasar -۳ Tarikh Ibn `Asakir XVIII:۳۱۰; Tarikh al-Tabari, First Edition IV:۵۲ (al-Husayniyyah al-Misriyyah).

In Mukhtasar Tarikh Ibn Asakir XVIII:۳۱۲, Qays b. Ab۱ Hazim is recorded as saying: -۴ "Umar left us, document in hand and accompanied by Shadid, his protege, saying. "O People, hearken to the words of the Successor of God's Messenger, I wish for you `Umar, so accept his oath." In another version: "Hearken and obey what is contained in this paper."

He did it through a circle of six persons, to whom he assigned the task of designation, leaving the rest of the Muslims no role whatsoever in the selection.(۱) But this meant that his method of succession did not express the spirit of consultation, any more than did that of the first Caliph. Upon being asked by the populace to appoint a successor, `Umar declared, "If one of two men - Salim Mawla Abi Hudhayfah and Abu `Ubaydah b. al-Jarrah - had come to me, I would have done that with him, as I trust him; had Sahm been living, I would not have set it up as a consultation."(۲)

On his deathbed, Abu Bakr told `Abd al-Rahman b. `Awf in confidence, "I wish I had asked the Messenger of God to whom is the right. No one then would have challenged it."(۳) When the Ansar had gathered at Saqifah in order to make Sa`d b. `Ibadah the Amir, someone from their midst called out: "When the Qurayshi Muhajirs refuse, they or some group in their midst say, `We are Muhajirun. We are [the Prophet's] clan and the first to have embraced Islam.' To which we retort, `One Amir from us, one from you'; less than this we shall never accept."' But in his address, Abu Bakr answered them: "We are the Muhajir clans of the Muslims and the first to embrace Islam. In this respect, the populace comes after us. We axe the clan of the Messenger of God and,

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۱- Umar said to Suhayb: "Lead the prayers for three days. Then admit Ali, `Uthman, al-Zubayr, Sa`d, `Abd al-Rahman b. `Awf and Talhah, if he comes forward. Have `Abd Allah b. `Umar attend, even though the matter concerns him little. And observe them: if five of them are in unison over one man and a sixth declines, extirpate the latter or strike off his head with your sword., If only four agree on someone from their midst and two decline, then strike both their heads; if three accept one man and three another, then let `Abd Allah b. `Umar adjudicate in favour of one side, from which he is to select one man. Should they disagree with `Abd Allah b. `Umar's judgement, take then `Abd al-Rahman b. `Awf's side and slay the rest if they are loathe to accept what people have agreed on..." Cf Tarikh al-Tabari II:۵۸۱; Ibn Athir, al-Kamil fi al-ta'rikh III:۶۷ (Tabat Dar Sadir). This text has no commentary.

۲- Tabaqat b. Sa`d III:۳۴۳ (Beirut: Tab°at Dar Sadir) - Imam. Cf. Tarikh alTabari II:۵۸۰

.(Dar al-`Ilmiyyah). The report here differs from Ibn Sa`d's

.Ibid II:۲۴۲ -۳

of all the Arabs, foremost in kinship [to him]."(۱) When the Ansar, proposed that the :Caliphate alternate between the Muhajirin and the Ansar, Abu Bakr answered

When the Messenger of God was sent the Arabs were too self-important to abandon the religion of their forefathers, so they opposed and distressed him. But God has marked off those of His people who migrated as being the first [al-Muhajirin al-awwalin] to have faith in him. In all the earth, they were the first to worship God; they are his [i.e. the Prophet's] friends and his kin, the mostt deserving to rule after him. (None but the unjust would contest this... (۲

Encouraging the Ansars rigidity was al-Habbab b. al-Mundhir, who contended, `.`Stay your course! People are under your sway, and should anyone insist, then let there be one Amir from us and another from them..."(۳) 'Umar responded by saying: "As likely as two swords sheathed together! Who shall' quarrel with us, his Friends and kinsfolk, about the authority of Muhammad, or what he has bequeathed, but a deceiver - one (given to sin and tangled in failure?"(۴

In sum: the method used by the first and second Caliphs to appoint a successor; the absence of any disapproval of it by most Muslims; the spirit that dominated the thinking of the Muhajirin and the Ansar (the two rivals of the first generation on the Day of Saqifah); the initial tendency which clearly set the Muhajirin on the path to establishing a principle restricting all power

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Ibid. II:۲۳۵ -۱

Ibid II:۲۴۲. Imam 'Ali responded by arguing something similar to the following,' -۲ found in Mukhtasar Ta'rikh Ibn Sad XVIII ۳۸-۹. If the pursuit of Islam and faith alone could qualify a human being for the Caliphate, besides a necessary propinquity with the Prophet, or that he is friend and kin, then `Ali has gone the farthest in the worship of God and faith in the Prophet's Message. Indeed, his worship of God was not preceded by idolatry - he has never prostrated himself before idols - unlike all the others. As for his proximity to the Messenger, he was his closest kin. Strictly speaking,

he was his heir [wali], brother and vicar - the only person to lead in his stead. (Cf. Musnad al-Imam Ahmad IV:۲۸۱) According to this reasoning, he is the most rightful .person to succeed, no other

.Tarikh al-Tabari II:۲۴۱ ff, for events in ۱۱ AH -۳

.Ibid II:۲۴۳; Ibn Abi al-Hadid, Sharh Nahj al-Balaghah VI:۶-۹ - Imam -۴

to themselves; the Ansar's exclusion from power; the emphasis on what the Prophet has bequeathed, justified in terms of the precedence enjoyed by his clan above all others; the readiness of many Ansar to accept the idea of two Ami`rs (the one from the Ansar, the other from the Muhajirin); Abu Bakes expression of regret, upon becoming Caliph, for failing to ask the Prophet about who was most qualified after him: etc.(۱) - all this makes it clear beyond the shadow of a doubt that the thinking adopted by that segment of the first generation of Muslims to whom power was transferred after the Prophet's death was not based on consultation. No definite idea about such a system had existed. How then can one imagine the Prophet giving legal and intellectual notification of a consultative system, or preparing a whole generation of Muhajirin and Ansar for the transfer of leadership within the Mission of Islam based on such a system? How can it be so if no conscious application of such a precise system or concept to be found?(۲) By the same token, one cannot imagine that the Messenger, as the leader, could have put this system in place, given it legal and conceptual definition, and then failed to apprise the Muslims of it or to educate them (in it.(۳

All that only proves that the Prophet never intended to offer consultation as an alternate system. It is unlikely that it was proposed in any manner corresponding to ,its importance

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.Ta'rikh al-Tabari II:۳۵۴ -۱

This is because, going by the present hypothesis, if attention had been drawn to -۲ such a system, as would invariably be required, then we would have come across a specific concept in texts pertaining to this generation, or some specific application. However, nothing of the sort has been detected, as the Imam Baqir al-Sadr rightly .pointed out

Because instruction normally occurs in his noble biography and blessed tradition, -۳ but bearing on issues of a lesser nature and importance than this question; it takes .place in myriad contexts or situations

and later to vanish altogether from every quarter and every political tendency.(١)
.What makes this truth quite plain are the following points

First of all, by its very nature the consultative system was new for the kind of milieu that had never seen, before the prophethood of Muhammad, any finished system of governance,' which makes it all the more necessary that a concentrated effort to inculcate it would have been undertaken, as indicated above.(٢)

Secondly, being a foggy notion, “consultation” is ill-suited as something having any chance of being implemented, however much one tries to expound its details, measures and standards of preference in the event of disagreement; or, indeed, whether these standards depend at all ran number and quantity, or on quality and experience, etc. - in short, all the things that might have given the idea its features and suitability for implementation(٣) right after the Prophet's death?

Thirdly, in one forth or another, in fact consultation enunciated for the Ummah an exercise of authority by way of mutual consultation and a determination of political self-determination the responsibility for which attaches to a great number of people (namely, all those implicated in the consultation). Therefore, if it were a legally-sanctioned political rule, to be implemented after the Prophet, it would have been presented to as many of these people as possible. And they would have had a positive view of consultation, each bearing his measure of the responsibility.(۴)

These points prove that if the Prophet were to adopt the consultative system as

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١ - The abiding truth is that all details pertaining to the idea of consultation have vanished even at a level which might have defined its most basic features as a system of rule, as it has not been related that any of the contenders, whether at the conference of Saqifah or afterwards, had come forward with or clung to a single text in any degree. For the Saqifah texts, see Ta'rikh al-Tabari II:٢٣۴ff.

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۳- This is in respect of the need for sufficient clarification to help settle the issue of leadership, now left vacant; thus averting the dreaded dangers that accompany the .absence of precise standards in this connection

۴- That is, as is the case with every legal responsibility, for this will be elaborated on. This was exactly what the Prophet was wont to hold regarding all legal responsibilities. God says: "We brought down a remembrance that ye may clarify to the people what has come down to them" (Qur'an ۱۶:۴۴ "al-Nahl") If it were legally-sanctioned rule, a duty that had to to be performed by those qualified, it would have .required clarification

a substitute for what existed during his own lifetime, he would have been duty-bound to give full scope to preparing for the idea of consultation, both in terms of depth and in a general psychological sense. He would have had to fill every gap, disclose every detail that could make it a practical idea.

At that level, he would need to give it quantity, quality and depth - which was an impossible thing to do. But all these features then would have had to be expunged anyways from the Muslims' midst, the Prophet's own contemporaries. For one would think that the Prophet had to present the idea of consultation in an appropriate form, on a scale called for by the situation, both quantitatively and qualitatively, in order to make it comprehensible to the Muslims; before political impulses were suddenly awakened, obscuring the truth and forcing the people to suppress whatever they happened to hear from the Prophet about consultation, its precepts and details.

But this hypothesis, too, is not practicable. Whatever may be said about these impulses, they did not apply to ordinary Muslims, the Companions of the Prophet who had no part in political events after his death, or in raising the pyramid of the Saqifah.

Their position was only secondary, though one that always represents a numerically large portion of every society, regardless of how much politics may impinge upon it.(١)

Had consultation been proposed by the Prophet in the desired dimensions, the politically-motivated would not have been the

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١ - That is, as came to pass in the attempt to expunge the principle of walayah (or "guardianship") in `Ali's case. Despite this, the relevant texts have not all disappeared Many texts have come down through recurrent and uninterrupted transmission. Cf. Ibn Manzur, Mukhtasar Ta'rikh Ibn Asakir, XVII:٣٥۶ff, XVIII:١-٥٠. If there were any texts or statements on consultation as a system, they have passed into oblivion.

only audience to hear its stipulations. On the contrary, different people would have heard them. These stipulations would have been reflected naturally among the common people who had known the Prophet; just as the Prophetic traditions recorded by the Companions themselves did, in fact, with respect to the superiority of .(Imam `Ali and his Guardianship (wisayitihi

How, then; can political impulses have failed to prevent hundreds of hadiths by the Prophet concerning Imam `Ali, his Guardianship and religious authority(١) from reaching us through the Companions, even though they conflicted with the dominant current at the time; whereas nothing has come down to us that conveys the least (information about the notion of consultation.(٢

Indeed, those who typified the dominant current frequently disagreed in their political stances. It was in the interest of one or the other faction to use consultation as a slogan against the other. Still, we do not know of any of these factions having employed this slogan as a judgement actually taken from the Prophet. For example, one might observe Talhah's rejection of Abu Bakr's designation of `Umar, over which he was indignant.(٣) Despite this, he never contemplated playing consultation as a card against this designation, or to condemn Abu Bakr's stance by claiming that he .contradicted what the Prophet had said about consultation and selection

Second Issue

The second point is this. If the Prophet had decided to make the first generation -- one that included both the Muhujirun and the Ansar from among his Companions - overseers of the

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See the appended study. Cf. Ibn Manzur, Mukhtasar Ta'rikh Ibn Asakir XVII:٣۵۴, - ١ XVIII:I-۵٠; Abu Na'im, Hilyat al-awliya' I:۶۶; Ibn Sa'd, al-Tabaqat al-kubra II:٣٣٨; al-Qanduzi, Yanabi al-mawaddah I:۶٢ff; al-Nassa'i, al-Sunan al-kubra and al Khasais .V:١٢٨ff

It is noteworthy that the Muslim writers investigating the question of political order -٢

or the Caliphate, who dismiss the whole idea of stipulation and designation (illustrated by hundreds of Prophetic traditions), relying instead on the notion of a consultative system and using the Qur'an among other sources, have not come across any Prophetic texts in support of their claims. As a result, they are compelled to rely on the biographies of the Companions. And yet, they have not been able to give a logical interpretation for the Companions' rather confused and incongruous situation in the midst of which a successor was appointed. Cf Dr. al-Rayyis, al-Nazariyyat al siyasiyah al-islamiyyah; `Abd al-Fattah `Abd al -Maqsud, al-Saqifah mal-khilafah.

٣- Cf. Ibn Manzur, Mukhtasar Ta'rikh Ibn Asakir XVIII:٢٣٠, on the story concerning al-Sha'bi, who was with Talhah, al-Zubayr, Said and `Abd al-Rahman.

Islamic Mission after he was gone, responsible for continuing the drive for change, this would have obliged him, as the leader, to enlist their broad intellectual and apostolic commitment in such a way as to maintain certain theoretical depth; in the light of which they could consciously seek practical application.

In this way, from the Divine Message itself would issue solutions to the constant problems faced by the Islamic Mission; especially as the Prophet, auguring the fall of Khusraw and Caesar,(١) knew that the Islamic Call would soon see a grand victory. He knew that the Islamic Ummah would shortly include new peoples in its ranks and extend over great distances. It would soon be its responsibility to inculcate these peoples in Islam, to fortify itself against the dangers represented by this expansion, and to apply the provisions of the Law to the inhabitants of the lands conquered.

This was in spite of the fact that, of all generations, the first that inherited the Call was the most inculpable, the most prepared to sacrifice. But it was one that showed no indication of any special preparation to assume the custodianship of the Mission, let alone a deep or wide-ranging instruction in its notions. The records that warrant this rejection of this are too many to be included here.

Indeed, in this connection one might observe that, all .told, what the Companions have managed to transmit in stipulations from the Prophet in the area of legislation does not exceed a few hundred hadiths.(٢)

١- Ta'rikh al-Tabari, First Edition II:٩٢ (Beirut: Dar al-Kutub al--`Ilmiyyah). This relates to the Prophetic hadith at the time when a trench was being dug.

٢- Cf. Sunan Abi Daud, on account of its specialty in hadiths on legal rulings; Imam Malik's al-Muwatta ; with a total of ١٥٧٠ hadiths, some of which are mursal.

At the same time, the Companions numbered close to twelve thousand, as reckoned by the history books.(۱) The Prophet used to live among thousands of them in a single city, with a single place of worship, morning and night. Therefore, would there not ?have been in these records some indication of a special preparation

Actually, the Companions were known to avoid putting questions to the Prophet. Instead, awaiting a querying Bedouin arriving from out of town, they would allow one (from their midst to overhear the answer.(۲

They were of the opinion that it was more convenient to abstain from asking about the legal provisions of decrees that had not yet come to pass. With this idea in mind, `Umar proclaimed from the pulpit, "I forbid anyone to ask about what does not exist. It is God who discloses that which He brings forth..."(۳) "It is not permissible," he insisted, "for anyone to ask about what is not. God has given His Decree for what He brings forth into existence..."(۴) One day, a man came to Ibn `Umar asking about .something

He replied, "Do not ask about something that is not. I heard `Umar b. al-Khattab denounce the person who asked about what is not..."(۵) A man also queried Ubayy b. Ka`b concerning a particular problem; the latter told him: "My son, has what you ask me about come to pass?" "No." "Then allow me to defer my answer until it has," Ubayy (b. Ka`b returned." (۶

Umar one day was reciting`

The four volumes of Ibn Hajar's al-Isabah fi tamyiz al-sahabah count up to ۱۲,۲۶۷. -۱ See Dr. Akram Diya' al-`Umar's Buhuth fi ta'rikh al-sunnah al-musharaffah, Third edition (Beirut. Mu'assasat al-Risalah,۱۹۷۵) (the note on p. ۷۱). Cf. Dr. Subhi al-Salih, Ulum al-hadith wa mustalahahu, p. ۳۵۴. It is related on Abu Zar'ah that the Prophet left .behind ۱۱۴,۰۰۰ Companions

Dr. Subhi al-Salih, Nahj al-balaghah, Imam `Alis's Sermon No. ۲۱۰, p. ۳۲۷. He said: -۲ "Not all of the Messenger's Companions used to question or query him, so much so

that they preferred that a Bedouin or a complete stranger to ask and they listen. But none of it would go past me without my asking and retaining..."

۳- Nashr Dar Ihya' al-Sunnah al-Nabawiyyah, Sunan al-Darimi I:۵۰.

۴- Imam - Ibid I:۵۰.

۵- Imam - Ibid. I:۵۰.

۶- Imam - Ibid ۱:۵۰.

:the Qur'an, and then stopped at the words

And (We) produce therein Corn, and grapes and nutritious plants, olives and dates,“ (enclosed gardens, fruits and abban [`fodder'].(١

Then he said, “We know all of these, but what is the `abb'.. By God, this is onerous. You are not accountable for what you cannot understand. Follow only what appears limpid to you in the Book, and act accordingly. What you do not know leave to the one (who can master it …”(٢

In sum, the Companions tended to be averse to all questioning beyond the limits of current, definable problems. This tendency, of course, led to the scanty number of legal stipulations transmitted from the Messenger. But beyond that, it led to the need for sources other than the Book and the Prophetic Tradition (sunnah) - such as juridical discretion (istihsan), analogy (qiyas) and other types of independent legal judgement (ij'tihad) in which the personal identity of the interpreter comes into (play.(٣

Their aversion thus paved the way for an infiltration of the legislative process by the human personality through men's particular tastes and ideas. And such a tendency was furthest removed from the special apostolic preparation required by this generation. Such a preparation implies extensive training and instruction in the legal .resolution of problems soon to be faced during its leadership

Just as the Companions had refrained from querying the Prophet, so they failed to collect his sayings and traditions (sunnatihi),(۴) although these comprised Islam's .second (legislative) source

Collection is the only

.'Qur'-an ٧٠:٢٧-٣١, `”Abasa -١

.Al-Suyuti, al-Itiqan fi Ulum Qur'an II:۴, ed. Abu al-Fadl Ibrahim -٢

Shafi`ite legal interpretation (ijtihad) dismisses the two theories of “legal or juridical -٣ discretion” (istihsan) and “unbounded interests” (al-masalih al-mursalah), as religious law (al-shariah) takes it upon itself to clarify every legal ruling needed by man, whether through explicit text, allusively or legally-sanctioned analogy, This is because legal discretion has no regulative mechanism or scale by which one can weigh the true against the false. It is reported that Shafi'i had said, “To use legal discretion is to .legislate.” See al-Madkhal al fiqhi al-amm by Dr. Mustafa al-Zarqa I:١٢۴-٢۵

On the question of the writing of the hadiths, their prohibition and subsequent - ۴ endorsement, what was found and recorded by Dr. Subhi al-Salih, 'Ulum al-hadith wa .(mustalihihi (Tab'at Dar al-` Ilm lil-Malayin), p. ٢٠ff (in the notes

method of preserving and protecting them from loss or distortion. Based on Yahya b. Sa'd (who transmitted, in turn, from `Abd Allah b. Dinar), al-Harawi uttered these disparaging words: "Neither [the Prophet's] Companions nor those who followed used to write the sayings [hadith]. Instead they conveyed them verbally and committed (them to memory."(١)

In fact, according to Ibn Sa`d's Tabaqat, the Second Caliph had been confused as to the best position to take with respect to the Prophetic Tradition (sunnat al-rasul). This persisted for a month, after which he announced -a prohibition against recording any of it." Thus it was that the Messenger's practice, the most important source for Islam after the Holy Book itself, was given over to fate, subject to forgetfulness here, to distortion there and, finally, to the passing away over a course of about ١۵٠ years of all (those who had it stored in their memory."(٢)

The exception in this regard were those who upheld the (rights of the) Prophetic Household (ahl al-bayt). They tirelessly began recording and collecting from the very first period. There are narratives relating how the Imams had collected a voluminous book in which are gathered the words of the Messenger himself in the handwriting of (`Ali b. Abi Ta١ib's(٣)(۴)

Does anyone honestly believe that an artless course - if, indeed, even artlessness is pertinent - such as eschewing all questioning about an event prior to its occurrence, or of refusing to record the Prophet's practices once they materialize, can ever make one equal

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Ibid.. See also Sunan al-Darimi I:١١٩ (Ch. "Who ought to disregard the written - ١ .(["hadihs?" ["man lam yara kitabat al-hadith

.(Ibn Sa'd, al-Tabaqat al-kubra III:٢٨٧ (Tab`at Dar Bayrut,١۴٠۵ AH -٢

The first official collection of traditions was written by Muhammad b. Muslim b. - ٣ Shahab al-Zuhri (dd.١٢۴ Al-١), as ordered by `Umar b. `Abd al--`Aziz. He is said to have affirmed: "This knowledge has never been put into a collection before." Cf. Dr.

.Subhi al-Salih, Ulum al-hadith wa mustalihatuhu, p. ۴۶

Usul al-Kafi I:۲۴۱-۴۲ (Ch. “Dhikr al-sahifah wal jafr wal jami`ah”) (Tehran: Nashr Dar -۴
.(al-Kutub al-Islamiyyah, ۱۳۸۸ AH

to the task of heading the new apostleship at the most critical and most difficult phase of its protracted course? Does one really believe that the Messenger has left his Tradition (sunnatahu) scattered about without record or precision, while enjoining adherence to it?(1)

Or, would it not have been necessary to establish the statutes of "consultation" and to fix its norms (if indeed he were preparing the way for such a system), so as to set it on a stable and definite path, where idiosyncracies would not come into play. (2)

Is not the only reasonable explanation for this approach by the Prophet that he prepared Imam `Ali as the leading authority and for a practical leadership after he is gone; indeed, pouring immeasurable knowledge ("a thousand doors") and turning his Tradition entirely over to him. (3) Events after the Prophet's death have confirmed that the generation of Muhajirin and Ansar could not truly claim to be in possession of definite instructions for the many significant problems confronted by the Mission of Islam.

So much so that neither the Caliph nor his circle of supporters had any clear idea of how to govern the prodigious land area, over which Islam had triumphed, according to the religious rule of law - whether to distribute it to the soldiery or to make it an endowment for collective use by the Muslims.'(4)

Is it conceivable that the Prophet would assure the Muslims of their imminent triumph over the "Land of Khusrow and Caesar,"(5) making the Muhajirin and

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1- As in Hadith al-thaqlayn ("Two Weights': "Verily, I have left among you that by which, if you adhere to it, you shall never go astray after I am gone...," whose reliability has been indicated above; see, for example, Sahih Muslim IV:۱۸۷۴; cf. Muhammad Taqi al-Hakim, al- Usul al-Ammah, his study on the Sunnah.

2- In n. ۱۷ above, we alluded to issues concerning the confused matter of consultation, differences over its proper criteria and features from one Caliph to the other. Cf. `Abd al-Fattah Abd al-Maqsud, al-Saqifah wal-khilafah, p. ۲۶۴.

Cf Shaykh al-Mufid, al-Irshad, p. ٢٢; al-Qanduzi, Yanabi al-mawaddah I:٦٢. See also -٣
"...this book's appendix, "The Intellectual and Moral Upbringing of Imam `Ali

Ibn al-`Arabi, Ahkam al-Qur'an IV:١٧٧٨ ("al-Hashr"); cf, al-Baladhuri, Futuh al - ۴
.buldan, p. ٢٦٨

On the prophecy of their conquest, see Tarik al-Tabari II:٩٢ (Beirut: Dar al Kutub al -۵
.(ilmiyyah

Ansar custodians over the Mission of Islam to preside over this conquest, but then fail to inform them how the religious rule of law needed to be implemented over these ?great expanses of land that would soon to come into the fold of Islam

What is more, the generation contemporary with the Prophet did not posses any clear, definite idea even of purely religious matters, although the Prophet performed his acts hundreds of times in his Companions' full view. One may mention, by way of example, the prayer for the dead. This is an act of worship that had been openly performed by the Prophet numerous times. He performed it at public funerals, which .were open to all participants and worshippers

Despite this, the Companions apparently did not consider it necessary to know the ritual itself so long as the Prophet performed it and so long as they followed him, step by step. As a result, they disagreed after his death over how many times to utter exaltations to God during prayers over the dead. Al-Tahawi related, on the authority :of Ibrahim

God's Messenger died while people were still arguing over the exaltation of God at funerals. One could hardly wish for less than to hear a man say, "I heard the Messenger exalt God five times'; and then another to say, "I heard the Messenger exalt God four times." They disagreed on this until the death of Abu Bakr. When `Umar succeeded him and saw how people disagreed, he became very

.troubled

So he communicated to some men from among the Companions of the Messenger the following: "You are fellows to the Companions of the Messenger: when you bring disagreement to the people, they will [continue to] disagree after you. When you bring agreement concerning a matter, people will agree on it." It was as if he had roused them from sleep. For they answered, "What an excellent view, O Commander of the (Faithful!"(١

Hence, the Companions used mostly to rely on the Prophet, while he lived, sensing no immediate need to understand the legal rulings or notions so long as they were in his (charge.(٢

It might be argued that this depiction of the Companions, together with whatever the records say about their lack of fitness to lead, contradict what we generally believe - namely, that the moral education given them by the Prophet was tremendously .successful; since it brought into being a towering, apostolic generation

The answer to this is as follows. In the foregoing, we have tried to establish an actual picture of the entire generation that witnessed the Prophet's death, without finding anything that might contradict in any significant way the positive value of the moral education given by the Prophet during his noble life. The reason is that we believe Prophetic moral education, at the same time, to be a stupendous instance of Divine (Grace) - indeed the revival of a messengership quite unique in the lengthy history of prophethood - we find that neither this belief

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١- Umdat al-qari; Sharh Sahih al-Bukhari VIII:١٣٧, Ch. "Takbir `ala al janazah" (Beirut:` .Dar Ihya' al-Turath) - Imam

٢- Dr. Mustafah `Abd al-Razzaq, Tamhid li-Ta'rikh al falsafah, p. ٢٧٢.

nor a realistic valuation of the product of such an education can stand solely on a picture of the final results, separate from the circumstances and conditions. Nor can it .be had by noting the quantity apart from the quality

To clarify, let us consider the following example. Supposing there is a teacher teaching the English language and its rules to a number of pupils. Now, let us suppose we would like to evaluate his teaching abilities. We cannot be satisfied with the teaching of the subject matter alone, nor with what the pupils managed to assimilate or to grasp of the English language and its rules. Rather, we would tie this to the time frame he needed to teach. We would also have to determine the pupil's prior standing; their initial proximity or distance to an English environment; the amount of difficulty or exceptional toil met with in the process of teaching hindering its natural course; and, finally, the which the teacher had in view as he taught his pupils the rules of language. The final product is as much a function of the teaching process as it is of (various other pedagogical conditions.(۱

Concerning the valuation of the moral education given by the Prophet, one must take :into consideration

One, the brevity of the period in which the Prophet had been able to provide moral education; it did not exceed two decades from the oldest companionship of those few who befriended him at the outset; it does not exceed one

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۱- The Imam splendidly draws attention to the precise criteria for the task of teaching and its final product. These criteria and observations are relevant to any effort at intellectual or moral training - and, likewise, to the effort to give a substantial .appraisal of a similar case

decade relative to the Ansar, and is no more than three or four years relative to the enormous numbers entering Islam -starting from the Accord of Hudaybiyyah and onwards to the triumph over Mecca.

The second consideration concerns the (general) situation prevailing before the Prophet had begun to play his role, the one experienced intellectually, spiritually, religiously and behaviorally. It includes whatever people happened to be bound to out of naivety, intellectual idleness and impetuousness in diverse areas of life. I find no need to elaborate the point further, it being self-evident that Islam was not a project for superficial social change, but rather for a change at the roots. It was the revolutionary construction of a new community. This implies a vast spiritual parting of ways between, on the one hand, the new situation realized through the Prophet's efforts to educate the Ummah; and, on the other, the one that preceded.(١)

The third consideration has to do with the profusion of events in this period - all kinds of political and military struggles that took place on numerous fronts. This is a matter that distinguishes the nature of the relation between the Prophet and his Companions from the type of relation that existed between a person like Jesus Christ and his disciples. It was not a relation that was quite that of a teacher or mentor devoted exclusively to the training of his pupils, but one that corresponded to the Prophet's position alike of mentor, military leader and head of

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١ - On what made Arabian and Hijazi society what it is before Islam, see Dr. Jawad 'Ali, Tarikh al-'arab qabl Islam (Sections on "religion" and "society".)

(state.(1)

The fourth concerns what the Muslims collectively faced as a result of their friction with the People of the Book(2) and various religious cultures encountered through social and doctrinal struggle. This friction, along with what those imbued in previous religious cultures had maintained within this forum, in opposition to the new Call, was a source of constant agitation and disturbance. It is widely known that it gave shape to an intellectual current based on Israelite legends,(3) which crept rather spontaneously or inadvertently into many areas of thought.(4) A careful perusal of the Qur'an is enough to reveal both the scope of the content of counter-revolutionary (thought and Divine Revelation's concern to guard against and to contest its ideas.(5)

Fifthly, the goal which the mentor, at that stage, strove to achieve at a general level was the creation of a healthy popular base that would permit those presiding over the new Mission - whether in his lifetime or thereafter - to collaborate with it and to persevere along the path of experiment. At the time, the short term objective, as such, was not to raise the Ummah up to the level of the leadership itself, in a way that required complete understanding of the Message or a comprehensive grasp of its .precepts

It did not demand absolute adherence to its ideas. At that stage, to define the goal with this in mind is quite logical, and necessary with respect to the nature of the drive for change. It would be

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۱ - Indeed, the variety of responsibilities and their natures, the challenges encountered by the Prophet as leader were so serious that the he could not find sufficient time to complete his education and instruction of wide sectors of the Islamic .community. Cf. Muhammad Baqir al-Hakim, Ulum al-Qur'an, pp. ۹۶-۱۰۰

۲ - In its wider sense, the expression "People of the Book" refers to Jews, Christians and Muslims, but often refers to the former two when interreligious relations are the .subject - Translator

.In reference to legends about people or events of the Israelite period -Translator -۳

Cf. Muhammad Husayn al-Dhahabi, al-Isra'ilayat fi tafsir wal-hadith (Damascus: - ۴
.(Dar al-Iman, ۱۹۸۵

Cf "Surat al-Munafiqun" of the Qur an. One might note here the actions and - ۵
movements of the Jews, the roles they played in Islamic history; cf. Muhammad
.(Jawad Mughniyyah, al-Isra'iliyyat fi al-Qur'an (Beirut

unreasonable to prescribe a goal that is incompatible with practical possibilities. Practical possibility in a situation such as the one Islam faced could never exist except within the limits alluded to here, since the spiritual, intellectual and social division between the new Mission and the corrupt reality that prevailed at the time did. not .allow people to rise to a level at which they could immediately lead the Mission

We shall elaborate on this in the next point,(۱) demonstrating its modality -which is that the continuity of guardianship with respect to the new and revolutionary experience is best embodied in the imamate of the Prophetic Household (ahl al-bayt) and `Ali's Succession. It was inevitable, imposed by the logic of change upon the .course of history

Sixthly, the Prophet left behind a large portion of the Ummah comprised of those who became Muslims after the Conquest - that is, who entered Islam after Mecca had been won over(۲) and after the new Mission had become politically and militarily .preponderant in the Arabian Peninsula

The Prophet had had scant opportunity to deal with these Muslims in the brief period that followed the conquest. The bulk of his dealings with them, in his capacity as sovereign, was strictly a function of the juncture that the Islamic State was passing through. It was at that juncture that the idea of "those whose hearts were brought together" (al-mu'allafah qulubuhum) appeared, one that acquired a place in the legislation concerning almsgiving (zakat)(۳) and other procedures. But this

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".That is, the following chapter entitled "The Third Path -۱

.("Al-Zamakhshari, Tafsir al-Kashshaf IV: ۸۱۰ ("Tafsir Surat al-Nasr -۲

As God says in the Qur an: "Alms are for the poor and the humble, those who - ۳ administer it and for those whose hearts have been reconciled, for those in bondage, in debt and in the way of God; and for the wayfarer: Thus is it ordained by God..." (Qur ("an ۹:۶۰ "Surat al-Tawbah

part of the Ummah was not isolated from others; it merged with them. It was .influential and was, in turn, influenced

Viewed within the framework established by these six issues, Prophetic moral education yielded prodigious results; it achieved a unique transformation and brought up a righteous generation wellsuited for what the Prophet was aiming for: to form a sound, popular base that could rally support around the leadership in this new .experiment

But this generation appears then to have acted as a sound, popular base so long as well-guided leadership was embodied in the Prophet. If the leadership had been able to maintain this Divine course, the base would have played its true role. This in no way implies that it was ready in practice to assume this leadership, or itself to steer the .Islamic experiment

Such a readiness requires a greater degree of pious and spiritual merging with the Call, much better comprehension of its precepts, concepts and various perspectives on life. It required a more thorough cleansing of its ranks of the "Hypocrites," infiltrators and "those whose hearts were brought together(۱) - who collectively continued to form a portion of this generation having a certain numerical .importance,(۲) and historical factuality

This segment had its negative effects, as indicated by the sheer bulk of what the Qur'an says about the Hypocrites, their schemes and postures. It nevertheless had individuals - such as Salman, Abu Dharr, `Ammar and others - whom experience was able to mold exquisitely for an apostolic purpose

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۱- They appear to be numerous so as to constitute a burden upon the State's financial reserves, whose concellation the second Caliph had defended on the argument that .Islam had become mighty and powerful

۲- .This is readily available in most interpretations of Surat al-Munafiqin

(and of assimilating in its crucible.(1)

That these individuals were found among the larger generation taken as a whole, in my view, hardly proves that the latter ever collectively attained the kind of level that could justify vesting it with the tasks of the Islamic experiment simply on the basis of consultation.

Even the majority of these individuals - as lofty of manner, deeply loyal or sincere as they may have been towards the Call of Islam - did not have in them anything that justified assuming they were apostolically qualified to preside, either intellectually or culturally, over this experience. Islam is not just a human outlook to be intellectually worked out in the course of practice and application,(2) and its concepts crystallized through faithful experimentation.

It is the very Message of God whose precepts, or concepts, are delimited and endowed with the general legal provisions demanded by the experience.(3) Leadership in the Islamic experiment cannot do without a grasp of the details and limits of the Message; it has to attend to its precepts and concepts.(4)

Otherwise, it will be forced to look to mental precedents and to its own tribal underpinnings. And that would lead to certain regression for the course of the experiment; particularly when one notes that Islam constitutes the seal of all the heavenly messages: it has to stretch over time, transcending the limitations of era, region and nation.(5)

This fact did not permit the leadership that was to establish the foundation for this temporal span to

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۱- As the Prophet said, "God hath commanded me to love four [persons], telling me of His Love of them: `Ali, Abu Dharr, al-Miqdad and Salman" (Sunan Ibn Majjah, I:۶۶). Cf. al-Tajj al jai lil-usul III:۴۰۵.

۲- Among circles of theorists and thinkers, a common statement is that theory is

enriched through application. That is why the Imam points out that Islam is not of this .sort

Cf “Nothing have we ommitted from the Book...” (Qur'an ۶:۳۸ “Surat al An'am”...and -۳ we sent down to thee the Book explaining all things...” (Qur'an ۱۶:۸۹ “Surat al Nahl”) ...so take what the Messenger assigns to you, and deny yourselves...” (Qur an ۵۹:۷ (”“Sural al-Hashr

.See our study appended at the end of this book -۴

We have not sent thee but [as a Messenger] to all men...” (Qur an ۳۴:۲۸, “Surat - ۵ (”Saba”) We have not sent thee but as Mercy for all...” (Qur'an ۲۱:۱۰۷, “Surat al Anbiya

engage in trial and error, heaping mistake upon mistake over time until the resulting hiatus threatened the entire experiment with breakdown and collapse.(١)

All of the above suggests that the instruction administered by the Prophet to the Muhajirin and the Ansar, at a general level, was not such as would be required for the preparation of a leadership intellectually or politically mindful of the future of the Islamic Call and the drive for change. It was a kind of instruction, rather, that was conducive to building a watchful popular base, one which could rally around the Mission's present and future leadership.

Any hypothesis claiming that the Prophet had been planning to hand over leadership of the experiment and custodianship after his death immediately to the Muhajirin and Ansar would entail, among other things, having to accuse the most sensible and discerning leader in the entire history of reform, one bearing a Divine Message, of being incapable of distinguishing between two things: a level of awareness called for by the popular base of the Mission, and one called for by the Mission's leadership, intellectual and political guidance.

Third Issue

The Call of Islam is for change and a new way of life. It aims at building a new Ummah, extirpating every root and trace of pre-Islam.

Collectively, the Islamic Ummah had hardly been under the aegis of this movement of change for more than a single decade, at most. In the logic of doctrinal missions - or any calling for change, for that matter - this

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١- The Prophet Muhammad wanted to spare his Ummah the bitterness and pains that go with trial and error, along with the suffering and calamity this may bring upon it He said: "Come! Let me write you a letter that you may never go astray after I am gone..." Yet the greatest loss - as expressed by Ibn 'Abbas - was that the Messenger was prevented from doing so. See the story in Sahih al-Bukhari VIII:١٦١ (Ch. "al I'tisam").

short span of time was insufficient to raise a generation under the tutelage of the Call to some level of awareness, objectivity and emancipation from the dregs of the past.(١)

It did not allow it to fathom fully what this new Call offered; nor could it help it, leaderless, to qualify for custodianship, bear full responsibility and complete the drive for change. The logic of doctrinal missions impels toward doctrinal tutelage for the Ummah for a longer period of time, permitting it to adapt to the custodians' higher level.(٢)

This is not something that can simply be inferred. It describes a truth demonstrated by the events that took place after the Prophet's death. It manifested itself within half-a-century or less of practice by the Muhajirin and the Ansar - leading and assuming custody of the Mission. No sooner had a quarter of a century of custodianship passed than the "Rightly-Guided Caliphate" and the Islamic experiment led by the Muhajirin and the Ansar began to -crumble under the heavy blows delivered by Islam's old enemies(٣) - although from within, not from without.

The latter were able gradually to penetrate the executive centers and furtively to exploit the leadership, which they then impudently and fiercely wrenched control of. They compelled the Ummah, its first and foremost generation, to abdicate its identity and headship. Governing was thus transformed into hereditary kingship,(٤) characterized by a disregard for respectability, slaying of the innocent,(٥) squandering of wealth,(۶) suspension of punishments and freezing of legal rulings,(٧) and playing

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١- Note the cases of defection and apostasy after the Prophet had died, all the plain inconsistencies and departures from Islam's clarities and morality committed even by some high-ranking military chiefs - as in the case of Khalid b. al-Walid who, in the story of Malik b. Nuwayrah, was accused by the second Caliph `Umar of "killing a Muslim [i.e. Malik b. Nuwayrah] and then coveting his wife." Cf. Tarikh al-Tabari II:٢٨٠ (Beirut: Dar al-Turath), the edited printing.

That was the logic of previous missions, as in Da'ud's (David's) succession by - ٢
Sulayman (Solomon); similar Musas (Moses succession by Harun (Aaron): "He said, Be heir of my people and be just..." Finally, this is necessitated by the logic of things and .that of the final Religious Law (al-Shariah). Cf Appendix

He means to allude to those who embraced Islam at the time of the taking of - ٣
Mecca. Among "those whose hearts were brought together" was Abu Sufyan and Mu .awiyah, Tarikh al-Tabari II:١٧٥

Cf. Ibn Khaldun, al-Muqaddamah (Tab`at Dar al Jil), p. ٢٢٧ ("The Transformation of - ۴
the Caliphate into a Monarchy" Ibn Athir III:١٩٩ (Tab`at al Halabli) relates that `Abd al-Rahman b. Abi Bakr interrupted Marwan, as the latter was giving sermon from the minbar of Medina, in order to defend Mu`awiyah's point of view, shouting at him, "By God! you lie as much as Mu'awiyah. Neither of you intends anything good for the Ummah. You want to make it Heraclean; whenever an Heraclius dies another rises in .his place." Cf. al-Suyuti, Tarikh al-khulafa p. ٢٠٣

Ibn Athir III:۴٨٧ relates that Hasan al-Basri, one of the most prominent of those - ۵
who succeeded the Companions, had stated, "Murawiyah has four traits; if he had but one trait, it would be violation. His leaping upon this Ummah sword in hand to seize power, without any deliberation, while there were Companions of virtue; bequeathing the throne to his drunkard son Yazid; making his claims on Ziyad; killing Hajar b. `Adi and his confidants. Woe upon him for Hajar! Woe upon him for Hajar and his "...!confidants

Cf. al-Tajj al jami lil usul V:٣١٠; for further details, see Sayyid Qutb's al-Adalah al- - ۶
ijtimaiyyah fi al-Islam, p. ٢٣١ ff

See what al-Suyuti relates in his Tarikh, p. ٢٠٩ff, regarding "What abominable - ٧
transgressions were perpetrated by Yazid against the Prophet's grandson, Husayn; the confinement of the rest of the family; the assault on Mecca, seizure of Medina, "!killing of its inhabitants and outrages against loved ones

with people's destinies. Land and spoils became the Quraysh's only requital, as the sons of Bani Umayyah jostled over the Caliphate.(۱) The situation in which the experiment found itself after the Prophet was gone, along with the consequences that shook it violently a quarter-century later, support -our reasoning - which is that an immediate transfer of political and intellectual authority to the Muhajirun and the .Ansar after the Prophet's death was a step too early to take and not at all timely

.Therefore, that the Prophet had ever taken such a step is simply untenable

The Third Discussion: Affirmation Represents Choice and Designation

The third hypothetical path is that of affirmation, representing the preparation and investiture of whomever will lead the Ummah. This is the only path in keeping with the natural order of things. It is especially reasonable in light of the conditions surrounding the Islamic Call, the people promoting it and the Prophet's own (conduct.(۲

The third option, then, is that the Prophet had adopted an affirmative stance toward the future of the mission after his death, selecting at God's behest a person for candidate whose presence was intrinsic to the Islamic Mission. Consequently, he would have to prepare this person for an apostolic mission(۳) and special leadership, so that intellectual authority and political guidance of the experiment may be vested ...in him

The purpose was to continue building, after the Prophet's departure, the leadership of the community and its doctrinal edifice, supported by a vigilant popular base composed of Muhajirin and Ansar. Further, it was

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۱ - ... He means Abu Sufyan's statement to `Uthman upon acceding to power. Cf. al Suyuti, Tarikh al-khulafa; p. ۲۰۹; al-Maqrizi, al-Naza` wal-takhasum bayna Bani .Hashim wa Bani Umayyah, ed. Dr. Mu'nis, p. ۵۶

۲ - No doubt, after excluding the two previous suppositions, only this one remains

.logically acceptable

See our explanation in the Appendix about this selection and the whole (intellectual, -٣
.practical and moral) enterprise of apostolic training

to permit the community to draw ever closer to a level qualifying it to shoulder the .responsibilities of leadership

Hence, it appears that this path is the only one likely to secure a healthy future for the Mission and to protect the experiment as it grows.(١) Certain widely and continuously-reported traditions about the Prophet indicate that he endeavoured to provide special apostolic preparation and doctrinal instruction to one person working for the Islamic Call; this, at a level suited for intellectual and political authority. To this person he entrusted intellectual and political leadership as well as the future of the Call of the Ummah after him.(٢) This illustrates that the Prophet as leader acted in accordance with the third path, as beckoned to and imposed by the very nature of the .circumstances we saw above

The only propagator of Islam designated for such apostolic preparation, to be handed over the future of the Islamic Call and set up as intellectual and political leader, was 'Ali b. Abi Talib. The Prophet nominated him for this task insofar as his presence was an intrinsic part of the Islamic Mission. He was the foremost Muslim and fighter for its cause all during the tenacious struggle against its foes. This is not to mention his place in the life of the Prophet himself. For he was a foster son to him, opening his eyes for the first time in the Prophet's lap. He grew up in his care, and had ample opportunity to interact with him

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١- Because, as the texts make explicit, the training of the Caliph who happens to lead .would be complete and the person actually designated

٢- .Cf the texts copied in our Appendix concerning our Sunni brethren

(and to follow in his footsteps, certainly more than any other human being did.(1)

There is a brimful of evidence from the lives of both the Prophet and Imam `Ali that the former had been been providing Ali with special apostolic training. The Prophet used to single him out for the concepts and truths he transmitted concerning the Call of Islam. For instance, whenever `Ali exhausted his line of questioning with the Prophet, the latter would anticipate him, thereby contributing further to the cultivation of his mind.(2) They would spend long hours, day and night, in private. The Prophet opened `Ali's mind to the ideas of the Mission; he taught him about the problems to be encountered along the way and the practical approach adopted until the last day .of his noble life

In his al-Mustadrak, al-Hakim relates the words of Abu Ishaq: "I asked al Qasim b. al-`Abbas, `How is it that `Ali is the heir of the Messenger of God?' He replied, Because (among us he is the first to reach him and the closest in clinging to him..."(3

In Hilyat al-Awliya' Ibn `Abbas' asserted that "We used to discuss how the Prophet had sworn `Ali in with seventy oaths, which he would never have asked of anyone (else."(4

In al-Khasa'is, al-Nassa'i relates that Imam `Ali had stated, "I had a status with the Prophet that no other person possessed. I used to call on the Prophet of God every night. If he was praying, he would finish off

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1- See Imam `Ali's address known as "al-Qas'iah," as mentioned in the Appendix. Cf. .Nahj al-balaghah pp. ۳۰۰-۰۱, edited by Dr. Subhi a۱-Salih

2- It is held that Imam `All had said, "Whenever I questioned him - that is, the Prophet - he would oblige. But when I remained silent, he anticipated me..." (al Nassa'i, al-Sunan al-kubra V:۱۴۲; al-Sawa`iq al-muharraqah), p. ۱۲۷.

3- Al-Hakim al-Nisaburi, al-Mustadrak ala al-sahihayn, III:۱۳۶, hadith No. ۴۶۳۳ (Beirut: Dar al-Kutub al Ilmiyyah).

4- Abi Na`im, Hilyat al-awliya' I:۶۸ (Beirut: Dar al-Kitab al-`Arabi, ۱۴۰۷ AH).

(with praisngs to God. When not praying, he would admit me in."(1)

It is also related that Imam `Ali had said, "My visitations to the Prophet were of two kinds: one by night and another by day..."(2) And al Nassa'i recounts that he used to say, "Whenever I questioned the Prophet he obliged; when I remained silent he anticipated me..."(3) This is also related by al-Hakim in his al-Mustadrak, with a note on its soundness, based on two famous authorities, or shaykhayn(4) al Bukhari and Muslim. Al-Nassa'i says that Umm Salamah declared the following:

About the one to whom Umm Salamah has sworn allegiance: "Of all people `Ali is closest to God's Messenger ...On the very morning that Gods Messenger was to die, [the Messenger] sent for 'Ali. I believe he had dispatched him for something. Then he asked thrice: Has `Ali arrived vet? The latter returned before sunrise. When he came back we knew that [the Messenger] was in some need of him. So we left the house. And that same day we were with the Messenger at A'ishah's house, which I was the last to leave, sitting behind the door, very near to them. `Ali was leaning over him. He was the last person with him, as far as we know. The Messenger took him in confidence and imparted his secrets.(5)

In his famous Qasi`ah Sermon, Imam `Ali, the Commander of the Faithful, described his unique relationship with the Prophet and the meticulous preparation and moral education he enjoyed:

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۱- Al-Sunan al-kubra, "al-Khasais" V:۱۴۰, bath No. I/۸۴۹۹.

۲- Al-Sunan al-kubra, "al-Khasais" V:۱۴۰, bath No. I/۸۴۹۹.

۳- Ibid. V:۱۴۱.

۴- Al-Mustadrak III:۱۳۵, hadith No. ۴۶۳۰, ed. Mustafa `Abd al-Qadir `Ata' (Beirut: Dar al-Kutub al-`Ilmiyyah, ۱۴۱۱ AH).

۵- Al-Nasaa'i, al-Sunan al-kubra V:۱۵۴, Ch. ۵۴. Cf the story in Mukhtasar Ta'rikh Ibn 'Asakir XVIII:۲۱.

well know my place of close kinship and special standing with God's Messenger. He put me in his lap when I was a child, embraced me close to his heart, offered me shelter at his berth. And there, admitted into physical contact with him, I scented his fragrance.

He chewed the food bits to feed me. Never did he find in me a mendacious word nor a patterer's deed. I used to follow him as the weaned young camel does its mother's trail. And every day he would bring up some new teaching in morals, admonishing me to emulate him. Every year he retired to [the Cave of] Hira', where I alone would see him. No single roof then had joined God's Messenger and Khadijah in Islam but that I was its third member.

I witnessed the light of the revelation and the message, and inhaled the scent of prophethood.(۱) These and other testimonies give us a picture of the kind of special apostolic preparation that the Prophet was accustomed to giving Imam `Ali as instruction for leadership in the Mission of Islam. There are a great many records about Imam `Ali's life after the death of the Prophet which reveal the special training for leadership whose effects were duly reflected in him.

The Imam excelled, indeed was an authority, in resolving difficult problems for the leaders who governed at the time.(۲) But there is not a single occasion known from the Caliphate period when Imam Ali consulted another, either

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۱- Nahj al-balaghah, ed. Dr. Subhi al-Salih, Sermon No. ۱۹۲.

۲- See Appendix; cf. al-Suyuti, Tarikh al-khulafa ; pp. ۱۸۰-۸۲. As `Umar b. alKhattab said, "God forbid that there be as problem and no Abu al-Hasan to solve it." Ibn Hajar, al-Sawaiq al-muhriqah, p. ۱۲۷.

for an opinion in Islam or for a way to rectify a situation. On the other hand, we know of tens of instances in which those leaders felt the need to refer to Imam `Ali, despite .certain wariness

But if there is abundant evidence that the Prophet had been giving special training to the Imam in order to continue the leadership of the Mission after he was gone, the evidence is no less great that the Prophet as leader of the Ummah had made known his plan; and that intellectual and political leadership over the Mission was transferred by him to Imam 'Ali. This is observable in the hadiths of "al-Dar,"(١) 'alThaqlayn" ("the Two Weighty Things"),(٢) "al-Manzilah,"(٣) al"Ghadir"(۴), indeed, of tens of other (Prophetic traditions."(۵

Within the framework of the Islamic Call, Shi'ism is thus embodied in the thesis postulated by the Prophet - at God's behest - aimed at securing the future of the Mission. Accordingly, it is not a phenomenon that was foreign to this stage of events, but a necessary result. It was natural to the Call's genesis, exigencies and initial ".circumstances, which drove Islam to give birth to "Shi-`ism

More particularly, it required of the first leader that he prepare the second leader for the experiment(۶) through whose hands and those of his successors this experiment will continue to develop in a revolutionary sense. Only then could it draw closer to its goal of change: tearing out every root and vestige of the pre-Islamic past and

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Hadith al-Dar upon the revelation of these words of the Qur'an: "Warn thy closest -١ kinsfolk" (Qur'an ٢۶:٢١۴, "Surat al-'Ushara"). Cf. Tafsir a١-Kabir III:٣٧١ (Beirut: Dar al- .(Ma'rifah

Hadith al-thaqlayn is provided by the compilers of sihah, sunan and masanid. Cf. -٢ .(Sahih Muslim IV: ١٨٧٣; Sahih al-Tirmidhi V:۵٩۶, edited by Kamal al-Hut (Dar al-Fikr

Hadith al-Manzilah: "You have the position with respect to me that Harun had with -٣ .(Musa..." (Sahih al-Bukhari V:٨١, Ch. ٣٩

For hadith al-Ghadir see Sunan Ibn Majjah, Introduction, Ch. ١١ ١۴٣; Musnad al ... -۴

.(Imam Ahmad IV:۲۸۱ (Beirut: Dar Sadir

.For elaboration on this theme, see the Appendix -۵

For the second Caliph's words to the consultative members, see Mukhtasar Ta'rikh -۶
.Ibn Asakir XVIII:۳۵

constructing a new community in accordance with the exigencies of the Call and its .responsibilities

Part ۲: The Emergence of the Shi'ites

Preliminary Remarks

So far we have learned how “Shi'ism” emerged. But whence did the “Shiites” themselves and the attendant division within-the Islamic Ummah originate? This is .what we shall now try to answer

If we observe closely the first stage of the Ummah's existence, the Prophet's lifetime, we shall find from the very outset of the Islamic experience two distinct currents. They coexisted within the same community newly brought to life by the Prophet. Their disaccord led to a doctrinal division immediately following the Prophet's death, one .which sundered the Ummah into two sections

One section was fated to rule, and thus to encompass the majority of Muslims; while the other was shunned from rule, destined to become a minority opposition within the .general fold of Islam. Shi'ism was this minority. Herein lie three areas of discussion

The First Discussion: The Genesis of Two Main Currents during the Prophet's Lifetime

The two chief tendencies closely associated, from the start, with the emergence of :the Islamic Ummah during the Prophet's lifetime are

One, the current representing a belief in the devotional acts of religion, its arbitral power and the unconditional acceptance of religious stipulations for every aspect of (life.(۱

The second is a current which sees religious faith as eliciting devotional deed only within the special scope of overt and covert acts of worship. It believes in the possibility of independent legal Judgement (ijtihad) and free discretion for the amendment and improvement of religious stipulations according to benefits (masalih) which might

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۱ – This is the tendency of the school of those who uphold the rights of the Prophetic Household and of Shi ism.

(accrue in other domains of life.(1)

The Companions, being foremost in faith and enlightenment, were the best fit to create an apostolic community (Ummah risaliyyyah); so much so that in all of human history no doctrinally-cohesive generation has been nobler, more magnificent or unsullied than the one brought up by the Prophet. Despite this, one must accept the existence of a wider tendency - beginning while the Prophet was still alive - proffering independent legal judgement as a way of determining "benefit" and inferring it from the circumstances. It emphasized, on the other hand, devotional acts in strict .accordance with the letter, religiously stipulated

The Prophet on many occasions suffered indignation on account of this tendency, even in his last hours, as he lay on his deathbed (as we shall see).(2) But there is the other tendency, which consists in a belief in and acceptance of the arbitral power of religion, such that devotional acts accord with both the religious stipulations and .every aspect of life

One of the reasons behind the spread among Muslims of the tendency toward independent legal judgement is that it seemed to cohere with man's natural inclination to exercise his discretion, especially in view of a perceived or valued benefit .rather than of some resolution whose significance he can hardly fathom

This current counted several bold representatives from among the more well-placed Companions. One case in point is `Umar b. al-Khattab, who used to argue with the Prophet and to exercise independent legal judgement on a number of

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۱- This is the tendency of the remaining, Sunni schools. For details see al-'Allamah al-Sayyid Murtada al-`Askari, Ma`allim al-madrasatayn; cf. Dr. Muhammad Salam .(Madkur, Manahij al-ijtihad (Kuwait: Matba`at jami`ah

۲- Sahih al-Bukhari VIII:۱۶۱ ("Kitab al-i`tisam") Note the situations where their devotional acts do not accord with the text. For example, upon failing to send Usamah's detachment and their objection to it; or the time when a letter was

intended to be written, as the Prophet was uttering, "Come! Let me write you a letter that you may never go astray after I am gone..." Observe also the situation surrounding the Hudaybiyyah Treaty. See the books in history and hadiths referred to so far. For a more detailed discussion, see al-Sayyid al-`Allamah `Abd al-Husayn Sharaf al-Din, al Muraja'at, edited and annotated by Husayn al-Radi and introduced by Dr. Hamid al Hafni and Shaykh Muhammad Fikri Abu al-Nasr (Mu'assasat Dar al-Kitab al-Islami)

issues in a way that was at variance with the provisions of the law. He believed this to be permissible so long as he thought his judgement did not impugn "benefit." In this respect, one may note his position regarding the Treaty of Hudaybiyyah and his protestations against it.(١)

It is observable in regard to several other issues, including the call to ritual prayer (al-adhan), where he exercised his free discretion by omitting the phrase, "Come to the best of deeds" (hayya `ala khayr amal)(٢); his position concerning the Prophet's legalization of mut'at al-hajj ("marriage during the pilgrimage")(٣); and other positions on independent legal Judgement.(۴)

These two currents were both reflected in the assembly called by the Prophet on the last day of his life. Al-Bukhari related in his Sahih the words of Ibn `Abbas:

When death was upon God's Messenger, and at [his] house were men who included `Umar b. al-Khattab, the Prophet said, "Come! let me write you an epistle by which you will never go astray..." `Umar then said, "The Prophet is overcome with pain, but we [still] have the Qur'an. We count on God's Book." Those present at the house disagreed and quarreled with each other. And one of them said, "Approach that the Prophet may write you a letter by which you shall never go astray." Another repeated what `Umar had said. When the inanities and the disputing persisted, the Prophet told them, "Leave!'(۵)

This event alone suffices to show the chasm that separated the two currents, the

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١- Cf. Ibn Hashim, al-Sirah al-nabawiyyah, Second Part, ed. Mustafa al-Saqqa et al. (Beirut: Dar al-Kunuz al-Adabiyyah), pp. ٣١۶-١٧. See also Tarikh al-Tabari II:١٢٢.

٢- See al-Qawshaji, Sharh al-tajrid, towards the end of the discussion on the "imamah," where he contends that "Me tasks of those in charge were devoted to spreading the Call of Islam, and triumph over East and West. But triumphing over kingdoms cannot be done without motivating the soldiery to endure peril on the way, that they might drink deep of the struggle for Islam, until they believe that theirs is

that best of deeds they shall look to on the Day of Judgement. The omission of this part of the adhan [i.e. "hayya`ala khayr al-`amal], in their view, had to do with giving priority to the benefit of those tasks over and above devotion in the manner foreseen by the Holiest Law. The second Caliph thus declared from his minbar that `Three things existed at the time of the Prophet which I interdicted, forbade and punished: temporary marriage [mutat al-nisa], marriage during the pilgrimage [mutat al-hajj] ".'!and `Come to the best of deeds

See al-Tajj al-jami lil-usul fi ahadith al-Rasul by Shaykh Mansur 'Ali Nasif (a noted -٣ `alim from al-Azhar University) II:١٢۴, "Kit-al hajj" on Abi jamrah al-Dab`i, who said: "I entered a temporary marriage but was forbidden by some people. And so I asked Ibn `Abbas, who sanctioned it. I went to the Ka`bah to sleep, whereupon a protagonist came to me. He said, `May the minor pilgrimage [`umrah] be accepted and the greater one [hajj] valid' [Abu Jamrah al-Dab'!] went on: So I went to Ibn `Abbas to inform him about what I had dreamed. `God is Great! God is Great! ' he said, `It is the practice of Abu al-Qasim's [i.e. the Prophet]."' It is equally narrated by Muslim and Bukhari. It is said of `Umran b. Husayn that he stated, "A verse [ayah] on the temporary marriage was sent down in God's Book, and so we acted upon it with His Messenger. The Qur'an did not prohibit it, and the [Messenger] did not forbid it to the day he died. Likewise with the two Shaykhs: Shaykh Nasif says on the margins that ".“The mutah was interdicted by `Umar, `Uthman and Mu`awiyah

For more details, see al Allamah `Abd al-Husayn Sharaf al-Din, al-Nass wal ijtihad, -۴ .pp. ١۶٩, ٢۴٣

Cf Sahih al-Bukhari ("Kirab al-ilm") I:٣٧ (Beirut: Dar al-Fikr,١٩٨١); cf. also Ibn Sa`d, al- -۵ .Tabaqat al- al-kubra II:٢۴٢

true extent of their incompatibility and rivalry. In order to depict the deeprootedness of independent legal judgement as a current, one may compare this event to the disagreement that erupted among the Companions over Usamah b. Zayd's installation as army commander, despite the Prophet's explicit ordinance to that .effect

The Prophet finally stepped outside to address the crowd: "O People! what is this talk surrounding my appointment of Usamah as commander. You contest his appointment now just as you previously did his father's. But by God, the latter was as fit to (command then as his son surely is now!"(۱

The two currents, whose rivalry began in earnest during the Prophet's own lifetime, were reflected in the Muslims' position regarding the thesis of the Imam's preeminence in the Mission after the Prophet. Those representing the devotional tendency (as opposed to the one for independent legal judgement) found in the Prophet's stipulation the reason for accepting this thesis without hesitation or .readjustment

The advocacy of independent legal judgement was viewed as offering the possibility of release from the pattern established by the Prophet, whenever a judgement imagined to be more harmonious with the circumstances was called for. By the same token, one observes that Shi`ites arose immediately after the Prophet's death, representing the Muslims who adhered in practice to the thesis of the Imam's preeminence and leadership, the first steps of whose implementation the Prophet had declared obligatory right after his departure. The Shi'ite current embodied, from the first, a repudiation of

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Cf. Ibn Sa'd, al-Tabaqat al-kubra II:۲۴۸; see also Ibn Athir, al-Kamil fi al-ta'rikh - ۱ .II:۳۱۸-۱۹

the Saqifah Council's attempt to paralyze the thesis for Imam `Ali's preeminence and .to transfer authority to someone else

:In his Ihtijaj, Tabarsi related Aban b. Taghlab's words

I told Ja`far b. Muhammad al-Sadiq, "May I be offered in sacrifice for you! Is there anyone among the Companions of God's Messenger who disclaims Abu Bakr's action?" He replied "Indeed. Twelve men repudiated it. Among the Muhajirin were Khalid b. Said, Ibn Abi al`Asi, Salman al-Farisi, Abu Dharr al-Ghifari al-Miqdad b. al-Aswad, `Ammar b. Yasir and Buraydah al-Aslami. Among the Ansar were Abu al-Haytham b. al-Tayhan, `Uthman b. Hanif, Khuzayma b. Thabit Dhu al-Shahadatayn, (Ubayy b. Ka'b, Abu Ayyub al-Ansari.(١

It may be argued that the Shi`ite current stood for religious devotion according to the text, while the tendency that opposed it represented independent legal judgement, with the implication that the Shi'ites had rejected independent legal judgement and did not allow themselves any right to exercise it. Yet observably, Shi'ites do make use .of it constantly in legal practice

The answer is that the kind of independent legal judgement practised by Shi`ites, and which they deem permissible - indeed, obligatory in a collective sense (wajiban kifa'iyyan) - is the one used to derive a juridical ruling from the legal text. It is not judgement applied to the legal text by virtue of either an opinion held by the .practitioner or some conjectured benefit." That is not permissible

The Shi'ite current disallowed the exercise of independent legal judgement in any such sense. Whenever we speak

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Tabarsi, al-Ihtijaj I:٧٥ (Beirut: Nashr Mu assasah al-A`lami, ١٩٨٣) - Imam. Cf. Tarikh -١ .al-Yaqub'i II:١٠٣

of the rise of two currents at the beginning of Islam, one often intends the following. One, where the devotion act is based on the explicit text; two, a tendency toward independent legal judgement But by independent legal judgement one could mean (either the rejection or the acceptance of the explicit text.(۱

The rise of these two tendencies is natural to every mission of comprehensive change seeking alteration at the root, where corruption prevails. It can have various kinds of effects, depending on the surviving vestiges of the past; and it may vary according to the extent to which the individual becomes immersed in the moral values of the new .Message and according to his attachment to it

Hence, we know that the current which stood for the devotional act based on the explicit text represented the greatest degree of adherence to, and the most complete acceptance of, the Divine Message. But it did not reject independent legal judgment within the framework of the text nor the effort to derive a legal ruling (hukm) there (from.(۲

What is important to note in this regard also is that the devotional act based on the explicit text does not imply a rigidity or inflexibility incompatible with the exigencies of evolution or any kind of initiative for renewal in the life of man. Devotion so based means, rather, as we now know, devotion through religion. It means embracing it in its entirety without leaving anything out. Such a religion carries within it all the elements

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Cf Imam Sayyid Muhammad Baqir al-Sadr, al-Ma'alim al jadidah lil-usul, p. ۲۳ff. It - ۱ contains ample details concerning the evolution of the master concept of independent legal judgement. The latter had been avoided because it used to mean: "Mat principle of jurisprudence which takes individual reasoning as one of the sources for arriving at judgements. But there was a concerted drive against this jurisprudential principle at the phase when traditions were being collected in the time of the Imams and those who transmitted their deeds (to posterity)..." The kind of independent legal judgement

enunciated by many Sunni schools of jurisprudence (like that of Abu Hanifah) regarded as one of the jurist's proofs and sources for inferences where there is not plenty of textual support, stands rejected. As Tusi said: "Neither the syllogism nor independent legal judgment for me is a proof. In fact, they are not to be used in legal matters." Nevertheless, as the concept of independent legal judgement developed and came to consist in the inference of a juridical decision (al-hukm) from the text - that is, synonymously with the inferential operation - it was accepted and put to use. For the divisions, types and scope of independent legal judgement, see `Allamah Muhammad Taqi al-Haki's al-Usul al-`ammah lil-fiqh al-muqaran, p. ۵۶ff

.Muhammad Taqi al-Hakim, al-Usul al-`ammah lil-fiqh al-muqaran, p. ۵۶۳ -۲

that make for resilience and the ability to adjust to the times. It embraces all kinds of change and evolution. Devotion through religion based on the stipulated text is devotion through all these elements, but with every fiber of one's ability to create, invent and renew.(١)

These are general features aimed at expounding Shi'ism in its definition as a "natural phenomenon" within the fold of the Islamic Call and of its appearance as a (self-conscious) response to this natural phenomenon.

The Second Discussion

The leadership belonging to the Prophetic Household and to Imam Ali, played out in the "natural phenomenon" so far alluded to consists of two types of authority.

The first is intellectual authority; the second, authority associated with governing and societal activity. Both were embodied in the person of the Prophet. In the light of what we have learned with respect to circumstances, the Prophet had had to determine the most fitting extension of his rule which could sustain each of these two authorities, in order that intellectual authority might fill any lacunae to be faced by the Muslim mind. A proper notion needs to be advanced - i.e. the Islamic viewpoint - on any intellectual or life issues evoked. It must explicate what appears ambiguous and obscure in the Holy Book.(٢)

The Qur'an constitutes the primary source for intellectual authority in Islam. Finally, the purpose is for socio-political authority to resume its course and to lead the trek of Islam along a societal path.

These two types of authority are combined

١- Cf. al-Ma'alim al jadidah lil-usul, p. ۴٠.

٢- Please refer to what we have tried to establish in the Appendix concerning this question: that is, the scope of Imam `Ali's power; his comprehension of God's Book; his grasp of the "particular" and the "general" (of its various applications); of the

abrogating and abrogated verses, its provisions and laws, the text's explicit and .implicit senses. See, for example, Suyuti's al-Ittiqan IV:۲۳۴

within the Household of the Prophet by force of those circumstances we considered earlier. Prophetic traditions have always confirmed this. The prime example of a tradition dealing with intellectual authority is the hadith of the “Two Weights” (hadith al-thaqlayn), where the Prophet proclaims:

I am about to be summoned [before my Lord], and must comply. I leave with ye two weighty things: God's Book, a rope from Heaven to Earth; and my progeny, the members of my Household. God the Gracious, the All-Knowing has informed me that they shall separate not to the day when they will be restored to me at the Basin. You behold how, you do by them after I am gone!(١)

The chief example of a Prophetic stipulation concerning authority in the exercise of leadership over society is hadith al-Ghadir. It is presented by Tabarani, on the grounds of its universally-accepted soundness, through Zayd b. Arqam's words:

The Messenger of God gave his sermon at Ghadir Khum beneath some trees, declaring. “O People, I am about to be summoned [before my Lord], and must comply. I shall be held to account and ye shall be held to account. But what will you say?” They replied, “We shall testify that you have delivered [the Message], striven and counseled. May God reward you for it!”

He then told them, “Would you not testify that there is no god but God [Allah], and that Muhammad is his Servant and Messenger that His Paradise is real and His Hell-Fire real; that death is

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١- Al-Hakim al-Nisaburi, al-Mustadrak `ala al-Sah'ih III:۱۱۹, where the author says, “It was corrected according to conditions set by al-Shaykhayn [i.e. al-Bukhari and Muslim] and presented by al-Muslim accordingly (cf. IV:۱۸۷۴. See Sahih al-Tirmidhi's I:۱۳۰ ; al-Nassa'i, al-Sunan al-kubra V:۶۲۲; Imam Ahmad b. Hanbal's Musnad IV:۲۱۷, III:۱۴-۷ - Imam. See also Sunan al-Darimi II:۴۳۲ (Ch. “Fazia'il al Qur'an”? (Dar Ihya al-Sunnah al-Nabawiyyah).

real; that the resurrection after death is real; that the Hour shall without a doubt come; that God resurrects all those who lie in their graves?" They said: "Nay, we shall testify to all this!" To which he replied, "O God be Thee Witness! O People God is my Guardian and I guardian of the faithful. I am more so than their own selves. For whomsoever I am a guardian, he too [i.e. `Ali] is his guardian. Lord, guard over the one who guards over him, and be a foe to his foe."(1)

Thus, of a considerable number of like traditions, these two outstanding Prophetic hadiths provide for the embodiment of both kinds of authority in the Prophet's Household. The Islamic current upholding the devotional act based on the Prophet's full stipulations believed in these authorities, and comprised those Muslims who were the benevolent friends of the Household.

But whereas the socio-political authority belonging to every Imam implies the exercise of power while he lives, intellectual authority is a permanent, unconditional reality unconfined to the period of his lifetime. Therefore, it has a living, practical meaning for every period. So long as the Muslims needed a definitive understanding of Islam, an acquaintance with its provisions, legality, prohibitions, concepts and moral values, there will be need for an intellectual Divinely-defined authority epitomized, firstly, by the Book of God; secondly, by the Prophet's Tradition (sunnat rasulihi) and that of the immaculate descendents, if the Household, who never have and never would diverge from

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1- On the margins, Imam Baqir al-Sadr points out the following: Hadith al-Ghadir is widely reported in books on traditions by both Shiites and Sunnis. The experts reckon the number of Companions who reported this hadith to be over a hundred. Those belonging to the following generation [al-tabi'in] who relate it number over eighty; those in the second century Hijri who committed the Qur'an and the traditions to memory nearly sixty individuals. Cf al-`Allamah al-Amini, Kitab al-Ghadir. In this book, the `Allamah al-Amini offers a number of hadiths reported by Zayd b. Arqam in their different version. It appears that Imam al-Sadr collected these accounts in exactly

the same form. (Cf. "al-Ghadir" I:٣١-٦; also, in the Appendix, see how the hadith in question was presented, including in Sunan Ibn Majah I:١١ (of the Introduction)). See .(Musnad Imam Ahmad b. Hanbal IV:٢٨١, ٣٦٨ (Dar Sadir

(the Books as indeed the Prophet himself has stipulated.(۱)

Fronts they very outset, the second tendency, which upholds independent legal judgement rather than the devotional act according to the text, had decided. with the death of the Prophet on transferring the authority for exercising political power to some leading personalities of the Muhajirin, thereby conforming with shifting and rather maleable considerations.

Immediately following the Prophet's death, the transfer of power to Abu Bakr was based on what came out of the limited discussions at the Saqifah session.(۲) `Umar later ascended to the Caliphate after being appointed by Abu Bakr(۳); `Uthman followed suit through an undesignated appointment by `Umar.(۴) Accommodation, a third of a century after the Prophet's passing, led to the infiltration to positions of power by the offspring of all those Meccans who had held out to the last (al-Tulaqa) (۵) and who just yesterday had been fighting Islam.

All that relates to political authority in its exercise of power. Intellectual authority, on the other hand, was difficult to institute in the members of the Household. Independent legal judgement therewith led to dispossession of their political authority, since the latter's institution entailed the creation of objective conditions for a transfer of power to them and a merging of the two kinds of authority.

However, it was equally difficult to acknowledge intellectual authority in a power-wielding Caliph, the requirements of intellectual authority being different from those of the exercise of power. The feeling that a person is qualified to exercise power did not

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۱- The famous hadith al-thaqlayn, about which we have already given explanation.

۲- Cf Tarikh al-Tabari, "Nusus al-Saqifah" II:۲۳۴.

۳- Ibid; see the description of `Umar's investiture.

۴ - See the description of the six consultative members involved in `Uthman's investiture, see Ta'rikh al-Tabari II:۵۸۰. Cf Imam Ali's "Shaqshaqiyyah Address,"

Sermon No. ٣, Nahj al-balaghah, edited by Dr. Subhi al-Salih, p. ٤٨. Also, Ibn Abi al-Hadid's commentary on it I:١٥١ ff (ed. Abu al-Fadl Ibrahim; and `Abd al-Fattah `Abd al-Maqsud), al-Saqifah wal khilafah, p. ٢٦٤.

٥- Al-tulaqa is a term used to describe those who embraced Islam only at the moment when Mecca was gained over, including Abu Sufyan and his son Muawiyah (Tarikh al-Tabari II:١٦١), this with the knowledge that they were both among those referred to as "al-muallafat qullubuhum" (cf. Tarikh al-Tabari II:١٧٥).

automatically imply that his installation as intellectual leader - the highest authority after the Qur'an and Prophetic Tradition in matters of theoretical understanding - was thought feasible. This kind of leadership required a high degree of refinement and theoretical comprehension, and clearly none of the Companions was more adequately endowed with it than the rest, if the members of the Household are (excluded.(١

The result was that the balance of intellectual authority continued to swing for some time. The Caliphs, in many instances, dealt with Imam `Ali on the basis of his intellectual authority, or something approaching that. So much so that the Second .Caliph repeated many times that "If not for 'Ali, `Umar would surely have perished

God forbid that there be a problem and no Abu Hasan to [solve] it..."(٢) Nevertheless, after the Prophet's passing, the Muslims in time became accustomed to see Imam `Ali and the Household as ordinary subjects, whose intellectual authority was not indispensable, but transferable to some reasonable substitute. That substitute was .rot to be the Caliph himself, but the Prophet's Companions

The principle of the Companions' collective authority was gradually postulated thus, in place of the authority of the Household. The substitute became palatable once the properly appointed authority was passed over, because the Companions' generation was said to have kept close company with the Prophet, thrived while he lived, (embraced his experience, heeded his words and practice.(٣

For all practical purposes, the members of the Household lost their God-given distinction to form part of

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Their need for Imam `Ali's authority, according to many textual sources showing -١ their open admission to this effect (cf. Suyuti's Tarikh al-khulafa, p. ١٧١); whereas Imam 'Ali never had to seek the authority of any one of them in matters of law or its .provisions

.Al-Tabaqat al-kubra II:٣٣٩ -٢

۳- Imam Baqir al-Sadr's appraisal of the first generation of Companions reveals the extent of objectivity maintained in his treatment of both the Muslims' history and the role of those who began teaming around Islam. Secondly, substituting the Companions for the Household was hardly accepted by many prominent Companions, such as Salman, `Ammar, Abu Dharr, al-Miqdad and others - they all remained loyal to the Household. Thirdly, although the ways of the Companions or their utterances prevailed, there was not complete acceptance that their views were defensible. It suffices to say that the way of the two Elders (i.e. Caliphs) was proposed to Imam `Ali the day of consultation, but was not accepted. See the knowledgeable and quite satisfactory discussion in al-`Allamah Muhammad Taqi al-Hakim, al-Usul al-`ammah lil fiqh al-muqaran, pp. ۱۳۳-۴۲.

the intellectual authority merely as Companions. But the Companions themselves were apt to experience sharp differences and conflicts, which sometimes reached the point of hostilities, with each party drawing the other's blood, impugning his honour, (hurling accusations of deviation and betrayal.(١

These differences and accusations, occurring as they did inside the intellectual leadership and doctrinal authority itself, engendered all manner of intellectual and doctrinal conflict(٢) within the body of the Islamic community. The latter reflected the conflictual dimensions of the intellectual leadership established by independent .judgement

The Third Discussion: Spiritual Shi'ism and Political Shi'ism

Here I would like to draw attention to a point whose clarification I consider to be of the utmost importance. Some investigators try to distinguish between two aspects of Shi'ism, the first Spiritual Shi'ism and the second Political Shi`ism. Spiritual Shi ism is believed to be the earlier of the two.(٣) It is also thought that the religious heads, or imams, of Imamate Shi'ism (descended from Husayn) had retreated from politics after the massacre of Karbala', devoting themselves only to guidance and worship, .keeping aloof of worldly affairs

The reality, though, is that Shi'ism has never at any time since its birth been a purely spiritual tendency. Rather, it was born in the midst of Islam as a thesis for the continuation by Imam 'Ali of intellectual, social and poetical leadership alike after the Prophet, in the manner illustrated above with respect to the conditions that had given rise to Shi'ism. Because of those conditions, it is not possible to isolate the spiritual

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١- Note the accusation by `Umar b. Khattab, the second Caliph, against Khalid b. al-Walid of having killed a Muslim and then turned on his wife (Ta'rikh al-Tabar'i II:٢٧۴ .([Beirut: Dar al-Kutub al-`Ilmiyyah

٢- Cf Dr. Muhammad Salaam Madkur, Manahij al-ijtihad concerning the emergence of theological (kalamiyyah) and legal (fiqhiyyah) factions and schools in Islam, along with

.the disputes that erupted among them. See also Shahrastani, al-Milal wal-nihal I:١٥ff

See Dr. Shaybi, al-Silah bayna al-tasawwuf wal-tashayyu I:١٢; Dr. `Abd al-`Aziz al... -٣
.Duri, Muqaddamah fi tar'ikh al-Islam, p. ٧٢

from the political side in this thesis, certainly no more than it is to isolate it in Islam .itself

Therefore, Shi'ism cannot be subdivided in this way except in the event where it no longer implies defending the future of the Call after the Prophet, a future that is in equal need of intellectual authority as it is of political leadership over the Islamic experiment. And here there existed a wide range of allegiances to Imam `Ali among the Muslims, inasmuch as he was considered to be just the person fit to resume the .role of governing arrogated by the three Caliphs

This is precisely the loyalty that brought him to power after the Caliph `Uthman's murder.(۱) But it was neither spiritual nor political Shi'ism, since Shiites believe `Ali to be an alternative to the three Caliphs, the Prophet's direct successor (khalifah). The allegiance extended by Muslims to the Imam had a wider range than Shi`ism proper, taken as a whole. But although spiritual and political Shi`ism developed within the broad limits of this loyalty, it cannot be regarded as an instance of a .compartmentalized Shi`ism

Imam `Ali commanded spiritual and intellectual loyalty from the most prominent Companions at the time of Abu Bakr and `Umar - as illustrated by Sahnan, Abu Dharr, 'Ammar and others. But this hardly means that it was a spiritual Shi'ism divorced from the political side. It was an expression of faith by the Companions in Imam `Ali's political as well as intellectual leadership of the Islamic Mission

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۱- Cf. Ta'rikh al-Tabari II:۶۹۶ff See also the description of the situation in Imam `Ali's Address, where he states, "Nothing was more delightful to me than people swarming around me, as hyenas do, from every side ...and gathered round like a resting herd of sheep (Nahj al-balaghah, ed. Dr. Subhi al-Salih, p. ۴۸ ("al-Shaqshaqivyah")

after the Prophet. On the one hand, their faith in the intellectual side of his leadership was reflected in the spiritual fidelity alluded to above; on the other, their faith in the political was reflected in their struggle with the Caliph Abu Bakr, and against the (attempt to divert power away from Imam `Ali toward another figure.(١

In fact, the compartmental view of spiritual Shi'ism was not unrelated to the emergence of political Shi`ism. Nor did it arise in the mind of Shi'ite man except in .resignation to a fait accompli

As a definite formula for continuing the Islamic leadership in the hope of building the Ummah - a way of implementing the great drive for change begun by the Prophet - the embers of Shi`ism were all but put out inside and transformed into pure belief .ensconced in the heart of man for solace and hope

We now come to what is alleged to be the abandonment of politics and the withdrawal from worldly affairs by the Imams of the Household descended from Husayn. In the light of the foregoing, we might reiterate that Shi`ism made for the continuation of Islamic leadership, and that Islamic leadership simply meant pursuing that project of change which the Prophet had begun, in order to complete the .construction of the Ummah on the basis of Islam

It is not possible, therefore, to imagine the Imams relinquishing the political aspect without renouncing Shi'ism altogether. What contributed to the idea that they had abandoned the political

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.See what Tabarsi relates in his al-Ihtijaj I:۷۵ -۱

aspect of their leadership was their seeming failure to mount military action to overturn the prevailing situation, the political aspect of leadership being taken strictly .in its narrow military sense

But there are many explicit utterances by the Imams which make it plain that an Imam is always ready to take the military course, provided he found enough assistance and the capacity to realize the Islamic objectives beyond the military campaign itself.(۱) When we trace the course of the Shi'ite movement, we notice that its leadership, comprised of the Imams of the Household, believed the transference .of power alone to be insufficient

The realization of change in an Islamic sense is impossible so long as this power was not shored up by a popular base conscious of the goals of power, believing in its theory of governance, acting to defend it, explaining its stances to the larger populace .and braving the storms

Midway through the first century after the Prophet's death, the Shiite leadership, shunned from power, sought constantly to return to rule in the ways it deemed proper. It was convinced of the existence of popular bases of consciousness, or .vigilant Muhajirin, Ansar and all those who emulated their best actions

However, half-a-century later, when little remained of these popular bases, and with indecisive generations(۲) newly emerging under the influence of deviationism, the accession to power by the Shiite movement would never have achieved the larger goal; the popular bases that reinforced consciousness and sacrifice no longer existed. In the

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۱- Cf. Usul al-Kafi II:۱۹۰ (Ch. "Fi qillat `adad al-mu'minin") (Tehran: al-Matba`ah al... .(Islaamiyyah, ۱۳۸۸ AH

۲- Consider what Umayyid policy visited upon the Ummah in pastimes, buffoonery, wine drinking, and brutality and repression against all opponents. On this question, see al-Mas`udi, Muruj al-dhahab III:۲۱۴ff; Ibn `Abd Rabbuh, al-Aqd al farid V:۲۰۰-۰۲;

Abu al-Faraj al-Asfahani, al-Aghani First Edition ٧:۶ff (Beirut: Dar al-Fikr, ١۴٠٧ AH). Concerning the Umayyids' frivolous use of wealth, see Sayyid Qutb, al-Adalah al-ijtima'iyah fi al-Islam.

:face of this situation, there were only two possible avenues for action

One, action for the sake of rebuilding the popular and conscious bases that could .properly pave the way to a transfer of power

Two, stirring the Islamic Ummah's conscience and will; safeguarding some degree of life and stalwartness to fortify the Ummah against abdicating unconditionally its .identity and honour to deviationist rulers

The first option was the one chosen by the Imams themselves; whereas the second was taken by the revolutionary partisans of 'Ali as they sought through fearless sacrifice to sustain the Islamic conscience and will. The Imams used to support the more sincere among them. Imam `Ali b. Musa al-Rida once said to Caliph Ma'mun, in reference to Zayd b. `Ali al-Shahid, that he was one of the learned from the House of .Muhammad

He was angered for the sake of God, fought enemies until he was killed in God's way. Abu Mus'a b. Ja`far has related to me that he heard his father Ja'far b. Muhammad say: "May God have merry on my uncle Zayd. He made summons on behalf of al-Rida, of the House of Muhammad. Had he triumphed, he would have fulfilled his promise. Zayd b. `Ali did not call what was not in his right to do so. He was more heedful toward God than that. He simply) said: I summon you to al-Rida, of the House of (Muhammad."(۱)

In one account, those of the House of Muhammad who ventured forth were mentioned before Imam

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A۱-Hurr al- Amili, Wasa'il al-Shiah, Fifth Edition, ed. `Abd al-Karim al-Shirazi XII:۳۹ -۱ (Tehran: al-Maktabah al-Islamiyah ۱۴۰۱ - Imam. See the edited version, Mu'assasah ("Al al-Bayt (Qum) XV:۵۴ ("Kitab al jihad

Ja'far al-Sadiq, who then answered, "I and my partisans will always be well so long as there is someone from the House of Muhammad who ventures forth. How I long for him to venture forth! And incumbent upon me is the maintenance of his (dependents."(١)

In sum, the Imams' abandonment of direct military action against the deviationist rulers did not imply that they had foresaken the political aspect of their leadership and devoted themselves solely to worship. It expressed merely a difference in the form of social action, and was limited by the actual conditions. It also expressed a profound .grasp of the nature of reform activity and the method by which to achieve it

Appendix : The Moral and Intellectual Preparation for 'Ali's Guardianship and Succession

Dr. `Abd al Jabbar Shararah

Introduction

Initiated by the Prophet, the intellectual and moral preparation for 'Ali b. Abi Talib's Guardianship and Succession proceeded along two parallel but complementary lines: the preparation of Ali and of the Ummah, both at the same time. While the Prophet, as Leader, was committed to a special intellectual and doctrinal education for `Ali that conformed to a rigorous daily schedule, he also took charge of the Muslim Ummah's .mental adjustment

He undertook to educate it intellectually and doctrinally in order firmly to establish `Ali's Guardianship. He wanted to ensure that `Ali was qualified to lead the journey, the whole experience, of Islam immediately after he departs. According to numerous sources, as we shall see, direct Revelation was another interposing factor pointing in .this direction

Invariably, the Qur'an comes down

۱ - Cf Ibn Idris, al-Sara'ir III:۵۶۹ (Qum: Mu'assasah al-Nashr al-Islami), for `Abd Allah al-Sayyari's narration of words by someone from the Companions.

sometimes lauding Ali's virtues and other times pointing to his special qualities. It identifies him as being unique, to the point of making the delivery of God's Message conditional upon the announcement of his Guardianship or its proclamation to the Ummah. We shall be seeking to establish this in our appendix to Imam al-Sadr's .already deep and original inquiry

We shall arrange our own study into three discussions. The first discussion will present 'Ali's intellectual and moral preparation for the task of leading after the Prophet. The second will deal with the intellectual and moral preparation of the Muslim Ummah for the sake of this task. The third will demonstrate the pertinence of .`Ali's unique and special knowledge of the Qur'an to this task

In this summary essay, we shall try to shed light on these facts by relying on the accepted rules and principles of scholarly investigation, without exaggeration or artifice. The study will be based on had'ith and exegetical works written by scholars, traditionists, renowned researchers and prominent Sunnis. We pray that God may .extend His assistance

The First Discussion

One may, in all certainty, state that `Ali b. Abi Talib's apostolic preparation, both "moral and intellectual," began upon the Prophet's first burst of Divine Revelation. The latter took practical steps in order to reach his intended goal of entrusting `Ali with the task of leading, "socially and politically" immediately after his death. It would appear from the course of events - and from what biographical works, histories and the more reliable

.transmitters have related – that this was achieved in two ways

First, as Leader, the Prophet was himself committed to taking `Ali under his tutelage from childhood, taking charge of his moral education, attending to him, doing his .utmost never to be separated from him except when necessary

Second, of all the Companions, `Ali was singled out in terms of status, knowledge and .position, which pertained to the very existence and future of Islam

A. With regard to the first point, biographical works and books in traditions all have endeavoured to illustrate many pertinent details. But the matter of the Prophet taking `Ali under his charge since childhood and educating him in his own house was a conspicuous part of his noble life.(۱) It is enough to recall what Imam 'Ali himself has :"stated in his sermon known as "al Qasiah

You well know my place of close kinship and special standing with God's Messenger. He put me in his lap when I was a child, embraced me close to his heart, offered me shelter at his berth. And there, admitted into physical contact with him, I scented his fragrance. He chewed the food bits to feed me. Never did he find in me a mendacious word, nor a patterer's deed. I used to follow him as the weaned young camel does its mother's trail. And every day he would bring up some new teaching in morals, admonishing me to emulate him. Every year he retired to [the Cave of] Hira' where I alone

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۱- Ibn Hashim, al-Sirah al-nabawiyyah, ed. Mustaa al-Saqqa et al I:۲۴۶.

would see him. No single roof then had joined God's Messenger and Khadijah in Islam but that I was its third member. I witnessed the light of the revelation and message, (and inhaled the scent of prophethood ...(۱)

The picture related by Imam 'Ali himself regarding the manner in which the Prophet .used to treat him reveals the true dimensions of the purpose

A special training was intended for `Ali. Extraordinary care and effort were taken to ensure that he remain very close to the light of Divine Revelation and exposed to the "fragrance of prophethood"; that he be one of three persons in the Prophet's house at the time of revelation. Occupying such an eminent place, he imbibed his first lessons and instruction directly from the Prophet. All this was reflected in his intellectual and doctrinal make-up, for "Never shall he bow down to any idol."(۲) Never at any moment was his mind confounded by idolatry, as his behaviour shows: "Not a mendacious ".... word, nor a patterer's deed

All this reveals, without the shadow of a doubt, a special moral preparation. What is noteworthy in this respect is that the Prophet's commitment to put `Ali in his special care was not limited to the period of childhood or boyhood. And it did not stop at any specific phase -the Prophet had made sure that `Ali was always at his side, day and night; as when `Ali says, "My visitations to the Prophet were of two kinds: one by nigh and

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.Nahj al-balaghah, ed. Dr. Subhi al-Salih, Sermon No. ۱۹۲, pp. ۳۰۰-۰۱ -۱

Manaqib Amir al-Mu'min'in II:۵۴۰, Hadith No. ۱۰۴۵, narrated by Abu Said; cf. al-Sa'id -۲ cf. al-Sahili, al-Rawd al-ani III:۱۶, n. ۱: "The first person to perform the prayer ritual was `Ali." He also stated that the same was said by Salman, Khabbab, Jabir, Abu Sa'id. .This is repeated in Tabarani's work

another by day..."(۱) Indeed, one never finds the Messenger of God ever separated from or leaving behind `Ali, except in the instance where it was necessary to protect the Prophet's life, or to safeguard the Islamic Call against danger. To corroborate, let us mention one example for each occasion.

i) The first context is linked to the protection of the Prophet's life. On the night of his blessed flight to Medina, the Prophet had left `Ali behind to lie in his bed(۲) as a subterfuge against the Meccans lying in wait for him; it allowed him to evade their plot to kill him.(۳) With this, God revealed the following: "And there is he who barters himself to earn the satisfaction of God..." (Qur'an II:۲۰۷, "al-Baqarah") - as recalled by Fakhr al-Din al-Razi.(۴)

ii) The second context is linked to the protection of the Islamic Mission. The Prophet had wished to go on one of his military expeditions called Tabuk. So he left 'Ali behind in Medina as his vicegerent (khalifah).(۵) Ibn Ubayy b. Salul, who headed the group of "Hypocrites," had remained in the city, and the situation demanded that the Prophet leave `Ali behind in the hope of forestalling any unexpected development that might threaten the Prophet's reign in Medina. Said al-Tabari:

With the Messenger of God departed [i.e. to Tabuk], among the "Hypocrites" and the irresolute who stayed behind figured `Abd Allah b. Ubayy, who was brother to the Banu `Awf b. al-Khazraj. Abd Allah b. Nabtal was brother to

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۱- Al-Nassa'i, al-Sunan al-kubra, "al-Khasa'is" V:۱۴۱, Hadith No. ۸۵۰۲.

۲- Ibn Hisham, Sirah II:۹۵ (Cairo: Matba`ah al-Hijazi, ۱۹۳۷).

۳- Ibid.

۴- Al-Tafsir al-kabir, Third Edition V:۲۰۴ (Tehran: Dar Nashr al-Kutub al`Ilmiyyah).

۵- Sahih al-Tirmidhi, ed. Kamat al-Hut V:۵۹۶ (Matba`at Dar al-Fikr).

Banu `Amr b. `Awf, and Rifa`ah b. Zayd b. al Tabun to Banu Qaynuqa`. And all - that is all those mentioned - were among the most infamous of the "Hypocrites"; they .counted among those who used to conspire against Islam and its people

He also added: "Ibn Hamid has told us that Salamah related from Ibn Ishaq - who related it from `Umar b. Ubayd, who related it from Hasan al-Basri - that God has brought down [these words: `Indeed they had plotted sedition before, and upset .("matters for thee..."' (Qur'an ٩:۴٨, "al-Tawbah

But here, the "Hypocrites" understood that, with `Ali remaining in Medina, the opportunity was lost. "The Hypocrites," continues al-Tabari, thus started to calumniate about `Ali b. Abi Talib. They claimed that he was [chosen to be] left behind .only because he was a burden to [the Prophet, who wanted only release from him

When they made these claims, `Ali took his sword and went off to find God's Messenger at Jurf, situated at some distance from Medina, and there told [him]: "Prophet of God! The Hypocrites allege that you have kept me behind; that you find ".me a burden and that you seek release from me

The Prophet] replied, "They lie. I left you behind for what [lay in wait behind me. Do] you not consent, O 'Ali, to having the same position with respect to me that Aaron did with Moses, save that no Prophet shall ever come after me?" With this, `Ali returned ,to Medina

(and God's Messenger resumed his journey.(1)

Al-Bukhari(2) and Muslim(3) have recorded the tradition relating to (`Ali's) “position” (or “station”) according to Sa`d b. Abi Waqqis, who said that

The Messenger of God has [chosen] to leave `Ali behind in Medina during one of his expeditions. So `Ali said to him: “O Messenger of God! You have left me behind with the women and the children.” I heard God's Messenger reply, “But you consent to be related to me in the same station that Aaron was to Moses, save that there shalt be (no prophethood after me.”(4)

One striking fact is that the Prophet used to express anxiety and apprehension at `Ali's absence from him; he eagerly awaited him and sought reassurance. Ibn Kathir(5) related Umm `Atiyyah's statement that “The Prophet sent off fighters, and among them was `Ali. I heard the Prophet say: `O God, do not take my life before you (let me see 'Ali again'.(6)

Occasionally, it happened that when offered a meal, the Prophet could not bear eating it alone; nor was he satisfied with praying to God that `Ali may join him, but that this be made an opportunity for demonstrating the station and rank of `Ali. It is recorded about Anas b. Malik that he related, “The Prophet had a fowl (in one account a `roasted fowl'(7)) and uttered: `O God, bring me this your most beloved person, so '.he may eat this fowl

And God brought him”, who then ate it with him...”(8) It is noteworthy that

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۱- Ta'rikh al-Tabari II:۱۸۲-۸۳. Cf. Ibn Kathir, al-Bidayah wal-nihayah VII:۲۴۰ff.

۲- Al-Shaykh al-Nasif, al-Tajj al jami lil-usul II:۳۳۲. It was related by al-Bukhari, Muslim and al-Tirmidhi.

۳- Sahih Muskm IV: ۱۸۷۳.

۴- Sahih al-Tirmidhi V:۵۹۶.

۵- Ibn Kathir, al-Bidayah wal-nihayah VII:۳۵۷.

۶- Al-Shaykh Mansur `Ali Nasif, al-Tajj al jami lil usul ahadith al-rasul III:۳۳۴, Third Bamuq edition (Istanbul: Dar Ihya" al-Kutub al-`Arabiyyah, ۱۹۶۱).

۷- al-Tajj al jami VII:۳۵۱.

۸- al-Tajj al jami III:۳۳۶.

some accounts speak of an attempt , after that appeal, to turn `Ali away upon his arrival at the Prophet's house; but it was thwarted by the Prophet's own intervention, according to what Ibn Kathir has related.(۱) However, the apparent sense of the account is that the Prophet meant also to affirm and to establish that `Ali was best loved by God.(۲)

All this leaves little doubt that our Prophet's special education of `Ali was aimed at preparing and training him for the responsibility of leading the Mission of Islam, and not merely to become part of its political staff or personnel. The Prophet was committed to educating and to training the Companions collectively, but not to the same degree or with the same method and attention as he was with `Ali. This shows that the responsibility 'Ali had been charged with was much weightier than that of the other Companions.

B. The second way alluded to above concerns the fact that 'Ali had been singled out; it concerns his competence in knowledge -particularly Qur'anic - and the positions which were historically decisive to the Prophet and to the Mission. It concerns his firm training in the provisions of the law. There is abundant evidence for this. Anyone who persuses the books on traditions, biography and history would profit immensely in this regard.(۳)

Let us now cite some examples that support our idea, together with the evidence for them.

The Prophet had undertaken, both on his own and by Divine Command, the

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۱- al-Tajj al jami, pp. ۳۵۱-۵۲.

۲- Ghayat al-ma'mul, Sharh al jami lil usul, III:۳۳۶, n. ۶, where it is said, "And with this: `Ali was best loved by God."

۳- Cf Ibn Manzur, MukhtasarTa'rikh Ibn Asakir XVII:۳۵۶ff and XVIII up to p. ۵۱.

task of inculcating `Ali, as he did no one else, in the learned and intellectual knowledge of the Qur'an. He hoped to do it with respect to the root principles and sources of learning, reflective wisdom and its rules, and by instructing him in the .provisions of the law, its allowances and prohibitions

Tradition has it that 'Ali uttered, "The Messenger of God has taught me countless pathways to knowledge, opening for me a thousand others for each one..."(۱) `Ali himself sometimes used to hasten to the Prophet in quest of knowledge, learning and judgements. At other times, the Prophet himself initiated the instruction: "Whenever I questioned the Prophet, he obliged; when I remained silent, he anticipated me..."(۲) At one time, he declared, "God has given me an inquisitive tongue and a sensible ,heart.."(۳) In this connection, Imam 'Ali stated in a lengthy hadith

Every verse that has come down to the Messenger of God he recited or dictated to me, and I wrote it down in my own hand. He taught me its interpretation and explanation, its abrogating and abrogated parts, clear and allegorical verses, particular and general injunctions. He invoked God that He may give me .understanding of it and that I may commit it to memory

So I did not forget a single verse of God's Book, not any knowledge that he transmitted to me. I wrote it down, from the moment of his invocation. The Messenger of God spared no knowledge taught to him by God concerning what

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۱- Al-Shaykh al-Mufid, al-Irshad, p. ۲۲, as narrated by `Abd Allhh b. Mas'ud.

۲- al-Tajj al jami lil usul VIII:۳۳۵; al-Suyuti, Tar'ikh al-khulafa ; p. ۱۷۰; Ibn Hajar, al... Sawaiq al-muhriqah, pp. ۱۲۶-۲۷.

۳- Al-Suyuti, al-Ittiqan IV:۲۳۴.

is allowed and what prohibited, no command or proscription - now and for ever - but that he taught it to me and that committed to memory. And I have not forgotten one letter of it ...(1)

Al-Suyuti asserts that Mu`ammar - as related by Wahb and, after him, Abu al-Tufayl - said the following: "I heard 'Ali giving an address and saying: `Ask me. By God, nothing will ye ask that I shall not discuss. So ask me about the Book of God and, by God, there is not a verse that I shall not know - whether it was revealed at night or in the day, on a mountain or on shore..."'(2) Al-Suyuti also affirms, "Verily, none of the Companions dared to say, `Ask me,' except `Ali..."(3)

Everything that 'Ali had talked about, of which history has left reliable record, was attested to by the prominent Companions. The scholars and the most prominent among them own to it. In his al Hilyah, Abu Na'im records that Ibn Mascud had said, "The Qur'an has come down in seven recitals, none of which is without its explicit [zahir] and implicit [batin] meanings. And `Ali b. Abi Talib [understood] both the explicit and the implicit meanings."(4)

It is related that Ibn `Abbas had uttered: `By God, 'Ali b. Abi Talib was given nine-tenth of the knowledge."(5) Also quoted from him are the words: "We used to discourse over how the Prophet had assigned `Ali sundry [lit., seventy] responsibilities which he assigned

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١- Nahj al balaghah, ed. Dr. Subhi al-Salih, Sermon No. ٢١٠, p. ٣٢٥. See also alMajlisi, Bihar al-anwar ٩٢:٩٩ (Tehran).

٢- al-Ittiqan IV:٢٣٣; cf. Tabaqat Ibn Sad II:٣٣٨; Ibn Hajar, al-Sawa'iq al'-muhriqah, p. ١٢٧.

٣- Ta'rikh al-khulafa p.١۶۶.

۴- Recorded in Suyuti's al-Ittiqan IV:٢٣٣.

۵- Al-Qanduzi, Yanail al-mawaddah I:۶٨-٩.

(to no one else."(1)

In practice, `Ali was the authority for the Companions in respect of every learned or administrative question that occurred to them, every juridical dilemma. It is affirmed of `Umar b. al-Khattab, the Second Caliph, that he said, "Without `Ali, `Umar would have perished,"(2) also uttering, "God forbid that there be a problem and no Abu Hasan to [solve] it.."(3) He is further said to have declared: "The most decisive [aqda] of us is Ali (4) where "decisiveness" implied knowledge of all the legal provisions. where "decisiveness" implied knowledge of all the legal provisions. where "decisiveness" implied knowledge of all the legal provisions. where "decisiveness" implied knowledge of all the legal provisions. where "decisiveness" implied knowledge of all the legal .provisions

The Second Discussion: The Preparation and Adaptation of the Ummah to 'Ali's Succession

The task of educating the Ummah to receive `Ali's Caliphate and direction over the advance of Islam after the Prophet, began early on -when the Prophet was first :commanded (by God) to give admonition and to communicate his Message

Divulge what ye have been commanded and turn away from the idol-worshippers"" .("(Qur'an ۲۵:۹۴ "al-Hajar

According to al-Tabari, `Before this, in the three years prior to his being sent forth and commanded to come out openly with the call to God, he had been concealing his [God-given] command; then this was revealed to him: `And admonish thy nearest kinsfolk"' (Qur'an ۲۶:۲۱۴ "al-Shu'ara"). In this connection, al-Tabari transmitted `Abd :Allah b. Abbas' statement about `Ali b. Abi Talib, who said

When that verse was revealed to God's Messenger ...he

۱- Hilyat al-awliya I:۶۸, Fifth Edition (Beirut: Dar al-Kutub al Arabiyyah).

۲- Ibn Kathir, at-Bidayah wal-nihayah VII:۳۵۹; cf, al-Suyuti, Tarikh al-Khulafa p. ۱۷۱

.Ibid VII:۳۷۳; Ibn Hajar, al-Sawa`iq al-muhriqah, p. ۱۲۷ -۳

Ibn Sa`d, al-Tabaqat al-kubra III:۳۳۹, Second Edition (Beirut: Dar al-Kutub al... - ۴
`Ilmiyyah, ۱۴۰۸ AH).f

called upon me, saying, "O `Ali God hath commanded me to admonish my nearest kinsfolk. But I am uneasy, for I know: when I divulge this Command, what I shall face .from them will be to my utter dismay

I held my silence on it, until [the Archangel] Gabriel came to me and said: `O Muhammad, if ye do not make good what you have been ordered to do, your Lord shall punish thee.' So bring forth a bit of nourishment, add to it a cut of leg, fill our jars with milk and bring together Banu `Abd al-Mutallib that I may speak and convey to them what I have been commanded. With that, I shall have done what He has ordered me to do: to call them to God.' On that day they were forty strong, more or ...less, including his uncles Abu Talib, al-Hamzah, al-`Abbas, Abu Lahab

,So the attempt was made. After they had drunk and eaten, al Tabari goes on

The Messenger of God spoke: "O Banu `Abd al-Mutallib, I know of no younger man among the Arabs, who has brought his people something better than what I am bringing to you [now]. I come to you with the best of this world and of the next. God has commanded me to call you to Him. And so, which of you will help me with this ".matter, becoming a brother, caretaker and successor to me

Alil explained, "Everyone recoiled from this. Although I was not their equal to`]

age and still the most bleary-eyed of the lot, I called out: I will, O Prophet of God, I shall be your aid in that. He took me by the nape, declaring, `This shalt be my brother, caretaker and successor - among ye all. So hearken and obey (' The people, he continued, then took to laughing, saying to Abu T-alibi "He orders you to hearken and "!to obey, your son

This narrative makes it clear that the first act of mental preparation for the acceptance of `Ali, as Guardian and Successor, occurred in a private milieu (that of the nearest kinsfolk). It took place alongside the announcement of Muhammad's .calling and the declaration of his prophethood

However, the preparation of the Ummah had another aim. Barely was the Qur'an being gradually revealed, certainly far from complete, when 'Ali began fighting alongside the Prophet. Qur'anic verses were thus revealed which praised 'Ali's excellence and virtues - all in the same vein. Based on al-Suyuti's account, Ibn `Asakir has written that "Nothing has been revealed in God's Book on a person as much as on (`Ali..."(۱)

He cited Ibn `Abbas as saying that "About `Ali there are ۳۰۰ [Qur'anic] verses."(۲) We shall adduce some of the verses, or ayat (sing., ayah), which are noted by more than one person as having been revealed about `Ali. Falling within our purview, they mark .the reality of the Ummah's preparation and education in this respect

:i) There are these words of God

To those who have faith"

.Tar'ikh al-khulafa, p. ۱۷۱; al-Sawaiq al-muhriqah by Ibn Hajar, p. ۱۲۷ -۱

.Ibid -۲

and perform deeds of righteousness the All-Merciful shall bring Love" (Qur'an ۱۹:۹۶ .("Maryam

According to various chains of transmission (asanid), several of those who had memorized the Qur'an stated that these verses were revealed about 'Ali, on the grounds that "there is no Muslim who does not have love for `Ali..."(۱)

It is related that al-Barra' b. `Azib has asserted that the Prophet said to `Ali b. Abi Tahb, "O `Ali, say, `Grant me, Lord, Thy keep and, in the hearts of the faithful, Love.' And so God revealed, `Truly, those faithful...' - which is about `Ali."(۲)

ii) God says: "These two adversaries quarrel over their Lord..." 'Ali is recorded as saying, "On the day of Resurrection, I shall be the first to fall on my, knees before the All-Merciful on account of the disputes." Qay s explains that "About them was revealed `These two adversaries quarrel over their Lord...,' they being those who disputed on the Day of Badr: 'Ali, Hamzah, `Ubaydah, Shaybah b. Rabi'ah..."(۳)

:iii) God says

And God turned back the faithless, for all their rage; they availed themselves of" .("naught. God suffices for the faithful in their fight" (Qur'an ۳۳:۲۵ "alAhzab

More than one authority has related that `Abd Allah b. Mas`ud read `Ali into the phrase "God suffices for the faithful in their fight."(۴)

:iv) God says

O ye who have faith, heed God and be amongst those who are true" (Qur'an ۹:۱۱۹ "al-" .("Tawbah

More than one memorizer and traditionist has related Ibn `Abbas' remark

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۱- - Cf. Ibn Na`im al-Isbahani, Ma nazala min al Qur'an fi Ali, compiled by Shaykh al-Mahmudi, p. ۱۳۰ff.

.al-Haskani, Shawahid al-tanzil I:۳۶۰-۶۱, First Edition -۲

.al-Tajj al jami lil-usul IV:۱۸۱. Also related by al-Bukhari and Muslim in Kitab-al tafsir -۳

.Ibn Na'im, Ma nazala min al Qur'an fi Ali, ed. Mahmudi, p. ۱۷۲ -۴

(that “that was [a reference] especially to 'Ali b. Abi Talib.”(1)

:v) God says

Those who harm the men and women of faith for no reason are wont to bear with“ .(”clear calumny and offense” (Qur'an ٣٣:٥٨ “al-Ahzab

The view transmitted through various channels is that it has to do with `Ali, as a (number of “Hypocrites” used to bring harm to and tell lies about him.(2)

Thus established is that these verses were revealed in order to show the position of `Ali, the greatness of his personality, his large role in the life of the Prophet and of the Mission. The faithful needed to be adverted of these realities and to comply with them. This is confirmed by Prophetic hadiths that proffer these senses. The ,Companion Sa`d b. Abi Waqqas declared

Mu'awiyah ordered me to curse Abu al-Turab. I replied that so long as I can recall the three things said to him by the Prophet, I shall not curse him. For me to possess just one of them would be dearer than the rarest of cattle: the Prophet had made him vicegerent during one of his expeditions. `Ali said, “O Prophet of God, you have left ”.me behind with the children and the women

I heard God's Messenger answer, “But you do consent to be related to me in the same station that Aaron was to Moses, save that there shalt be no prophethood after me.”(3) I heard him say also on the Day of Khaybar, “Truly, I shall give

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Abu Na'im, Ma nazala min al Qur'an fi Ali, p. ١٠۴. Cf the notes where he relates -1 accounts which have different chains of transmission. See also Ibn Hajar, al-Sawaiq .al-muhriqah, p. ١٥٢

.Cf. Tafsir al-kashshaf III:٥٥٩ -2

Hadith al-Manzilah, already cited above. Cf. al-Tajj al jami lil-usul III:٣٣٢ (recounted -3 .(also by al-Bukhari, Muslim and al-Tirmidhi

the standard to a man who loves God and His Messenger, and whom ? d and His Messenger love in return." We strained toward it then.(۱) [And the Messenger] said, `Bring `Ali to me!" [With this] his eyes were sore; so he put spittle in, them and handed .the standard over to [`Ali]. God then granted him victory

,Then the following verse was revealed

If anyone disputes with you over this, now that you have received knowledge, say, "Come, let us call upon all our sons and all your sons, all our women and all your women, ourselves and yourselves; and humbly make our supplication, invoking God's .("curse upon all those who lie!" (Qur an ۳:۶۱ ` Al `Umraan

And the Messenger called on 'Ali, Fatimah, Hasan and Husayn, declaring, "Lord, these are my family!" This is related by Muslim(۲) and Tirmidhi.(۳) In this account given by :Sa`d, certain things need to be emphasized

A) The revelation of the verse called ayat al-mubahalab ("Verse of Imprecation"), mentioned in his account above, concerns `Ali, his wife al-Batul, his two sons Hasan .and Husayn

B) These are, exclusively, all the Members of the Household.(۴) Accordingly, it is understood that they are the ones intended by the ayat al-tathir ("Verse of :Putification") - namely, where God says

And God only wishes to remove all sully from thee, ye Members of the Household, to" ("make thee wholly pure" (Qur'an ۳۳:۳۳ "al-Ahzab

And in this verse `Ali's inculpability, trustworthiness, eminence - indeed, impeccancy .(ismah) - become evident

Thus begins the

Cf. Abu Hurayrah's account, where `Umar says, "I have never desired to command -۱

as I did that day, I leapt toward it" (al-Tajj al jami lil-usul III:۳۳۱; recounted by al-Bukhari and Muslim).

۲- Sahih Muslim, IV: ۱۸۷۳.

۳- Sahih al-Tirmidhi V:۵۹۶. Cf. Ibn Hajar, al-Sawa'iq al-muhriqah, p. ۱۴۳; cf. the account al-Tajj al jami lil-usul III:۳۳۳.

۴ - al-Tajj al jami lil-usul IV:۲۰۷. Two narrators, al-Tirmidhi and Muslim, relate that `Umar b. Umm Salamah, the Prophet's stepson, had said, When the verse on "purificatio" (tathir) was revealed in the house of Umm Salamah the Prophet called on Fatimah, Hasan, Husayn and `Ali He then draped them in a shroud, saying: "Lord these are the members of my household. So remove all sully and wholly purify them." Umm. Salamah asked, "Am I not among them, O Prophet, He answered, "Do not change your place, as you are fortunate."

question of entitlement, since `Ali occupies the rank of Successor, Guardian and the ,one who was to steer the course of the community. As al-Raghib al-Isfahani said

None is more eligible to be God's Vicegerent nor apt to complete his worship of God and clear His land than the pure of spirit, from whom all defilement has vanished. Just like the body, the soul has its defilement; although the former can be directly seen, whereas that of the soul is perceived only through insight. No one is equal to the Caliphate who is not pure of spirit because to be Caliph is to emulate God according to what is humanly possible. As for the impure in both word and deed, every- vessel that (carries him leaks...(۱

It is evident from this that, after lauding `Ali's excellence and virtues, the Qur'an elevates him to a chastened level of absolute "purification," and then to a level that is of the greatest consequence, since it likens his soul to that of the Prophet Muhammad, as is clear from the "Verse of Imprecation." It was on this basis that the (Prophet had time and again declared, `Ali is of me and I am of `Alt."(۲

When certain persons tried to complain about `Ali, hoping to upset his station and position, the Prophet returned, "What do you want with `Ali?" repeating this three times; and then, "'Ali is of me and I am of him."(۳) In order to thwart those sceptical of the exalted position accorded

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۱ - Ibn al-Mufaddal al-Raghib al-Isfahani, al-Dhariah ila makarim al-Shariah, First Edition, edited and annotated by Taha `Abd al-Ra'uf Sad (Cairo: Maktabat al Kulliyyah al-Azhariyyah, ۱۳۹۳ Al-۱), p. ۲۹. For the meaning of al-`ismah ("impeccancy'"), see .Muhammad Taqi al-Hakim, al-sul al-`Aammah lil-fiqh al-muqarin, p. ۱۷۴

۲ - .Nasif, al-Tajj al jami lil-usul, III:۳۳۴; see also al-Suyuti's Tarikh al-khulafa ; p. ۱۶۹

۳ - .Sahih al-Tirmidhi V:۵۹۴

to 'Ali by the Prophet to ensure his waliyyah ("guardianship") and successorship :(khilafah) in everything of consequence to the Muslims, God declared

Your Guardian [wakiyukum] is God, His Messenger and those faithful who establish" regular prayer and regular charity - these are wont to bow down [in worship]" (Qur'an .("۵:۵۸ "al-Ma'idah

Al Zamakhshari pointed out that this blessed verse was revealed about `Ali when a beggar gestured the Prophet who, though bent over in prayer, surrendered his ring to him.(۱) To remove the ambiguity and to preempt all speculation about what was intended by the term Waliyy or was meant to be designated in these texts, the Prophet on more than one occasion stated that "Ali-is of me and I am of 'Ali. And after (me, he shall be the Guardian [wali] of every believer..."(۲

In order to confirm `Ali's Guardianship and momentous role in relation to the Call of Islam, the Prophet stated: "`Ali is of me and I am of `Ali. And no one can carry out my task [that is, in his capacity of messenger and prophet] but myself and `Ali..."(۳) This notion was finely established in practice, publicly and in the light of day, in connection with the matter concerning the delivery of "Surat alBara'ah,"(۴) Imam Ahmad b. ,Hanbal transmits in his Musnad from Abu Bakr al-Siddiq. Abd Bakr said that

the Prophet had sent him with Surat al Baraa'ah to the Meccans. He had trecked for three days, when the Prophet told `Ali, "Catch up to

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Al-Kashshaf I:۶۴۹, where al-Zamakhshari says in a note on the history of the hadith, -۱ "It was recounted by Ibn Abi Hatim through Salamah b. Kahil, who said, `He gave me his ring in alms while bent over [in prayer], and it was revealed"' - i.e. the Qur'anic verse; similarly related by Ibn Mardawayh, through Sufyan al-Thawri through Ibn Sunan, through al-Dahhak, through Ibn 'Abbas. Cf. also Asbab al-nuzul, p. ۱۳۴, where al-Wahidi says it was revealed about `Ali

.Sahih al-Tirmidhi, Ch. "Fada'il al-Imam Ali'; cf. al-Tajj al jami lil-usul III:۳۳۵ -۲

.Ibid -۳

.The ninth surat, otherwise called Surat al-Tawbah -۴

him!" `Ali returned Abu Bakr and delivered the surah himself. When Abu Bakr arrived before the Messenger, he said, "O Messenger, has anything [unseemly] come to light in me? He answered, "I have seen nothing but goodness from you But I was told that (no one but myself or someone of my kin shall ..."(١)

In the Kashsha, it is related that after Abu Bakr had travelled part of the way - in order to deliver Surat al-Bara'ah - Gabriel descended to say: "O Muhammad, only someone (of your kin shall deliver thy Message. So send `Ali.(٢)

The Qur'an puts the seal on the vitally important theme of intellectual and moral preparation with this last thing revealed in ayat al-tabligh ("V'erse of the Delivery"), and again with ayat al-ikmal ("Verse of Perfection'"), which followed the haidth of al-Ghadir. With that, there should be no difficulty.

The story of Ghadir handed down by the transmitters, with some differences, is as follows. When the Prophet returned from his Pilgrimage of Farewell, he received this insistent revelation:

O Messenger, convey what has been revealed unto thee from thy Lord; if not, ye" shall fail to deliver His Message. And God will protect thee from men" (Qur'an, ٥:٧٠ "al-(Ma'idah")(٣)

He halted the caravan at Ghadir Khum, gathering the people at midday in the intense heat to address them.

I am about to be summoned [before my Lord], with which I must comply. I leave thee two weighty things one of which is the rater: God's Book and

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١ - Musnad al-Imam Ahmad b. Hanbal I:٣ (Dar nadir); Tafsir al-Kashshaf al-Zamakhshari II:٢٤٣; also the account given in Sahih al-Tirmidhi V:٥٩٤.

٢- Al-Kashshaf

٣- Al-Wahidi stated that the verse came down at Ghadir Khum (Asbab al nuzul, p. ١٣٥).

my progeny and (according to Muslim's account, (1)"the members of my householdl"]. Ye behold how you do by them after I am gone! They shall separate not to the day .when they will be restored to me at the Basin

He then uttered, "Truly, God is my Guardian and I am guardian for every believer." He :took `Ali's hand and proclaimed

The one for whom I have been guardian:(2) here is his friend, his guardian. Lord, be the Friend of whomever befriends him, foe to whomever is inimical to him, disappoint the one discontented with him, assist the one who assists him,(3) and wherever he (roams let Truth roam with him...'(4

:This important event was followed by one more revelation

This day have I perfected for you thy religion, completed my favour upon you and" countenanced Islam [`the Submission to God] as your religion..." (Qur'an ۵:۴ "al-.("Ma'idah

In some reports, the Prophet's statement after receiving revelation or, that memorable day of Ghadir - namely, the ۱۸ Dhu al-Hujjah(5) - was: "God is Greater! .Praise be to God that religion has been perfected and His Favour completed

He has countenanced my mission and the Guardianship of `Ali after me."(6) According to Ahmad's account, "`Umar b. al-Khattab met him [i.e. Ali] and, after offering his felicitations, said to him, `You are Guardian to every man and woman of faith, (morning and night!"(7

What is regretable is that some people begrudged `Ali for being given such rank and distinction. Some became increasingly clamorous and argumentative when the

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۱- Sahih Muslim IV:۱۸۷۴.

۲- al-Tajj al jami lil-usul, III:۳۳۳. This is reported by Zay d b. Arqam about the Prophet, .(and is also found in Sahih al-Tirmidhi (V:۵۹۱

Musnad al-Imam Ahmad b. Hanbal, IV:۲۷۱, ۳۶۸ (Dar Sadir). Cf, Tafsir Ibn Kathir I:۲۲; -۳ "Introduction," Sunan Ibn Majah I, Ch. ۱۱. See also the full and satisfactory investigations in Asanid al-Hadith al-Ghadir by al-Allamah al-Amini; and also Ibn Kathirs al-Bidayah wa al-nihayah VII:۳۶۰-۶۱, where it is reported through several lines .of transmission

al-Tajj al jami lil-usul III:۳۳۷. It is separated reported here: "May God have mercy on -۴ "...`Ali. Wherever he roams let Truth roam with him

On the report concerning the revelation of the Verse of Ghadir and the fact that it -۵ was on ۱۸ Dhu al-Hujjah, see al-Suyuti, al-Ittiqan I:۷۵. Cf. also al-Wahidi, Asbab al ... .nuzul, p. ۱۳۵

Mananaqib Amir al-muminin I:۱۱۹, by al-Hafiz Muhammad b. Salman al-Kufi alQadi -۶ (one of the eminent figures of the third century), edited by al-Shaykh al Mahmudi. .(Majma` ihya' al-thaqafah al-istamiyyah (Qum, ۱۴۱۲ A H

Musnad al-Imam Ahmad b. Hanbal IV:۲۸۱. When `Ali called for witnesses from the -۷ crowd, thirty persons attested that they heard this utterance from the Prophet. Ibn .Kathir, al-Bidayah wa al-nihayah VII:۳۶۰

Prophet singled him out for this honour. The Prophet was, therefore, compelled to remind them that he was a Messenger sent by the Lord of all creation, that he must – fulfil what he has been commanded to do

And he does not speak from whim; it is but a revelation revealed" (Qur'an ۵۳:۳-۴ "al- ` .("Najm

This is evidenced by what Tirmidhi reported from Jabir b. `Abd Allah: "The 'Messenger called on `Ali on the Day of Ta'if, and whispered to him in secret. People then said, `His whispering to his uncle's son has lasted long.' The Prophet said, `It was not I who (whispered to him, but God…"(۱

Maymun, based on Zayd b. Arqam, related that a number of the Prophet's Companions had doors leading to the place of worship [masjid]. One day, the Messenger barred them, with the exception of `Ali's. He spoke about all these persons; rose, praised and extolled God. "Now, I have been commanded to bar all these doors except `Ali's." About this he declared `But I say to you, I have neither (barred nor gfned anything. I have been commanded something and complied…"(۲

In this manner, whenever the Prophet used to single `Ali out for distinction, thereby excluding others, he made it clear to the Ummah that it was by God's command. It took place when `Ali was dispatched, in place of Abu Bakr, to deliver Surat al-Bara'ah; .and again on the "Day of Whispering" at Ta'if, on the "Day of Ghadir," and so on

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۱- Cf. Sahih al-Tirmidhi, p. V:۵۹۷. See also Ibn Kathir, al-Bidayah wa al-nihayah VII:۳۶۹; .al-Tajj al jami lil-usul , III:۳۳۶

۲- Musnad al-Imam Ahmad IV:۳۶۹; cf. Ta'rikh Ibn Kathir VII:۳۵۵.

What is noteworthy about the most decisive moments in Islamic history and in the life of the Prophet - insofar as they helped safeguard the Islamic experience and its future - is that the Prophet used to send off and to call for `Ali as he did no other person. He used to do this on account of the critical nature of these situations, in order .to ward off unexpected dangers

This occurred during the great Battle of Badr, while `Ali carried the standard and slew some leading personalities among the Idolaters. It was repeated on the Day of Uhud, .when he slew Talhah b. `Utbman, the banner bearer of the Idolaters

Al-Tabari reported that, after 'Ali b. Abi Talib had slain the banner beaters [i.e. the "brigade commanders'], the Prophet caught sight of a group of Idolaters, and asked 'Ali to move against them. So he did, dispersing them all and killing `Amr al Jamhi. Then [the Prophet] noticed [another) gr oup of Idolaters, and told 'Ali to move against them. He dispersed them and killed Shaybah b. Malik. Thence, Gabriel asked: "This, O Prophet, is consolation"; whereupon the Prophet announced, "He is of me and I am of ".him." And Gabriel said: "And I am of both of you

Al-Tabari adds that they then heard a rejoicing voice, "No sword is there like Dhu al-Fiqar, no vigorous youth like `Ali."(۱)

Based on al-Bukhari and Muslim, it is sufficient just to refer to what Sa`d b. Abi Waqqas has reported concerning

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۱- Ta'rikh al-Tabari II:۲۵, ۶۵-۶ (Beirut: al-Maktabah al-`ilmiyyah).

the Day of Khaybar."(1) Al-Tabarani and Ibn Abi Hatim related about Ibn `Abbas that he uttered: "God censured the Companions of God's Messenger in places but spoke of `Ali only well."(2)

The Third Discussion: The Pertinence of 'Ali's Proficient Knowledge of the Qur'an to His Preparation for Succession

In the foregoing, we have noticed a special kind of relationship between 'Ali and the Qur'an. It emerged and developed to a point where, in the Prophet's own words,

The Qur'an is with `Ali; and `Ali is with the Qur an. They shall gseparate not to the day when they will be restored to me at the Basin.(3)

Moreover, if it grew and developed to a point where `Ali had had to do battle over the Qur'an's interpretation, just as he did over its revelation,(4) what then are its repercussions for the intellectual and moral preparation for his succession?

One can assert, first of all, that the Prophet had himself sought to nurture and to entrench this sort of relation - by the Command of God, as he was wont to say. It appears that there was an important objective for whose realization just such theoretical and practical steps or procedures were needed. One can equally demonstrate this objective in the light of the following observations:

(i) The logic of the Shariah (Islamic Law), complete.and eternal, must guarantee that the Qur'an is understood - insofar as it is the fundamental source(5) of this eternal law - along with its interpretation and provisions. To make the Qur'an the arbitrator among worshippers and nations is precisely what God has commanded us to

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۱- Sa`d's account as given by al-Bukhari and Muslim - see ns. ۵۴ and ۵۵.

۲- Al-Suyuti, Ta'rikh al-khulafa; p. ۱۷۱.

۳- Ibn Hajar, al-Sawaiq al muhriqah, p. ۱۲۳. See also al-Suyuti, Ta'rikh al-khulafa; p. ۱۷۳.

۴- Al-Qanduzi al-Balkhi al-Hanafi, Yanabi al-mawaddah, First Edition II:۵۸ (Beirut:

.Manshurat al-A`lami). Cf. Ibn Hajar, al-Sawaiq al-muhriqah, p. ١٢٧

That the Qur'an is the first and fundamental source for religious law is a matter of -۵ consensus for the Islamic community. See `Allamah Muhammad Taqi al-Hakim, al-Usul al-ammah lil fiqh al-muqaran, p. ١٠١.

:do, as when He says

Do they then seek a judgement from the [Time of Pagan] Ignorance [al jahiliyyah]?" Who is better in judgement than God for a people convinced?" (Qur'an ۵:۵۳ "al-Ma'idah").

Consequently, we must rely on the Qur'an for everything small and big, but disavow the judgements of the days of Ignorance, which are those of impulse. Likewise, God :has forbidden us to appeal to a false god, for He asks

Do you not see how those who claim to have faith in what has been revealed to you" and what has been revealed before you want to appeal to a false god. They have been commanded to disavow it. But Satan wishes to lead them far astray" (Qur'an ۴:۶۰ "al-Nisa").

Here, the Qur'an has rendered the choice of appealing to anything other than what God has brought down, or anyone other than the Prophet, as being one for the arbitration of Satan,(۱) who will lead them inexorably astray. The Qur'an affirms that appealing to anything else than what God has revealed is sinful, iniquitous and .constitutes unbilief

The ones who judge not by what God has brought down, these are the sinful" (Qur'an" ۵:۵۰ "al-Ma 'idah");

The ones who judge not by what God has brought down, these are the iniquitous"" (Qur'an ۵:۴۸ "al-Ma'idah");

The ones who judge not by what God has brought down, these are the unbelievers"" (Qur'an ۵:۴۷ "al-Ma'idah").

Our Prophet Muhammad was called on to turn the leaf on sinfulness, iniquity and .unbelief

Therefore, in

١- ٥٢٥:I Al-Zamakhshari, al-Kashshaf.

the logic of the Qur'an, the failure to refer to its provisions brought down by God means appealing to a false god.(١) If referring to the provisions of the Qur'an has been Divinely ordained, being the Will of the Lord; if this demands obtaining God's judgement as revealed in the Qur'an; then there must presumably be a person both qualified and fully prepared to carry out this Divine Command. There can be no one else but the Prophet, or someone "of him" to discharge and to impart it in his place(٢) – .someone qualified like himself and prepared for the task

ii) Strong, longstanding disagreement has existed among scholars -especially in) areas that are of importance to people and to their lives – for no other reason than a lack of grasp of the Qur'an. Imam `Ali referred to this issue when he disparaged :similar disagreement while the Qur'an was there in their midst

A case goes before one of them for judgement; so he passes judgement based on hts opinion. The very same case goes before another, who judges differently from the first. Thereupon the judges gather before the leader who appointed them He approves all of their options – although their Lord is One and their Prophet is One and !their Book is One

Has God really commanded them thus to disagree, and so they merely obey? or did He command them against it, and they now disobey? Has God revealed a deficient religion fox whose perfection He seeks their

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The term taghut applies to any person in charge who strays, and everything – ١ worshipped besides God. It is also applied to the unbeliever, Satan and idols (al Tariihi, .(Majma` al-Bahra yn I:٢٧۶

See how "Surrat al-bara'ah' was delivered, in Musnad al-Imam Ahmad b. Hanbal I:٣ -٢ .(Dar Sadir). Also, the text of the hadith in Ibn Hajar's al-Sawa`iq al-muhriqah, p. ١٢٢

assistance? Are they His partners, that they need only pronounce themselves and He to give His consent? Or has God brought down a perfect religion, but the Prophet :failed to convey or to achieve it? Yet God says

...("nothing have we omitted from the Book" (Qur an ۶:۳۸ "al An`am..."

We have sent down the Book to you explaining every manner of thing - a Guidance ("and a Mercy..." (Qur an ۱۶:۸۹ "al-Nahl

He also recalls that each part of the Book confirms the other, that the Qur'an has no ;discrepancies

Were it from anyone but God, they would surely have found many discrepancies"" .("(Qur'an ۴:۸۲ "al-Nisa

(The Qur an is clear and comely.(۱

Accordingly, the preparation of someone qualified for expounding the Qur'an must be .assumed

iii) `Ali's expertise in the Qur'anic sciences; his knowledge of the Qur'an itself in its) explicit and implicit aspects, the clear and the allegorical verses, the general and the particular; his unique ability to understand its verses and to discern its provisions - all (of these were recognized by learned Companions, as we have indicated.(۲

Prophetic traditions support and help establish them. The latter are also supported by what the exegetes and specialists in traditions on 'Ali, in particular, have recorded, among other sources. The Prophet has said, "O `Ali, God Almighty and Sublime has commanded me to draw you closer to me and to teach you that you tray become :mindful. And so, this verse has been revealed

and for retentive ears to retain`

See the text in Sermon No. ۱۸, Nahj al-Balaghah, ed. Dr. Subhi al-Salih, p. ۶۰-۱. Cf. as -۱

Sawa`iq al-muhriqah, p. ١٥٢, where the words of Imam Zayn al `Abidin are recorded in a supplication: To whom shall those who succeed this Ummah turn, once this community's beacons have been extinguished. The Ummah draws closer to disunion and mutual disagpreement. But God says: “Be not like those who became disunited and who disagreed after there came to them the proofs.” And so, only those are to be relied on to convey the proof and to expound the judgement who are the children of the Imams of True Guidance - candlelights in the gloom whom God offered as proof to His servants. God does not vainly leave His creation without a proof. Do you know or have ever found them to be anything but the branches of the Blessed Tree, the special elect from whom God has removed all defilement and truly purified. He has absolved them of evil and set forth their love for the Book...

٢- print) Appendix ١١٣ See p.).

.['it' [Qur'an ۶۹:۱۲ `al-Haqah

(You are an ear retaining my knowledge..."(۱)

.Reported also is the following statement by `Ali

This is the Qur'an. Ask it to speak, but it will not. Rather, I apprise you of it. Verily, it contains knowledge of what is to come, discourse on what is bygoe medicament for (your illness and the ordering of your affairs...(۲)

Thus Imam `Ali established that this Qur'arri contains much that is weighty and of profound meaning; it contains cures for bodily ills and a regular code for every aspect of life - all of which no one but 'Ali -or the emulator of `Ali - can either procure or grasp. Therefore, it becomes clear that besides him no one, without exception, was more qualified to understand the Qur'an, as obligated to realizing the Divine Command and to executing the Will of the Lord in order to end iniquity, sinfulness and .unbelief - according to the texts and the factsthan he

This is a most logical, most sound assumption, one that explains the intellectual and practical measures taken by the Prophet to give `Ali a singular knowledge of the .Qur'an, its sciences and judgements - as the most reliable traditions make clear

Finally, the context requires us to deal with the inevitable question, and that is the following. If every such measure, every intellectual and practical step was taken for the sake of `Ali b. Abi Talib's succession to the Prophet, why then is there not a covenant written in definitive and

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Abu Naim, Manazala min al Quran fi Ali, ed. al-Mahmudi, p. ۲۶۶. The editor mentions -۱ the chains of authorities in the notes. Cf. al-Suyuti, al-Dar al-manthur VI:۲۶۰ .((Manshurat al-Mar`ashi

.Nahj al-balaghah, Sermon No. ۱۵۸, p. ۲۲۳ -۲

(satisfactory form that neither gives pretext to its detractors nor elicits speculation?(١

The answer to this is that the texts and all the interconnected narratives adduced here – announcing the Prophet's promulgation of `Ali's Guardianship, Assistantship, Succession and Command after his own death – relate to situations and occasions too .numerous to list

But one matter of singular religious and worldly importance to the Prophet brought him finally to make an official public announcement on the Day of Ghadir, which he repeated several times, as we saw in this Appendix and as we found out from Imam al-Sadr's study. This bearly touches on what is determinable through the natural logic of events and the eternal, final law of God. But it is sufficient to anyone who deigns to .hear out what he sees

The Prophet, nevertheless, wanted to diminsh the Ummah's pains. He honoured the Ummah with the Lord's gracious care, keeping it from stumbling and falling astray. He proclaimed on his deathbed, in the very last hour of his noble life, "Come! let me write (you an epistle by which you will never go astray..."(٢

Around him were gathered some eminent Companions. He wanted it indeed to be a written covenant witnessed by the gathering. However, "what a calamity" occurred (in the words of Ibn `Abbas) when something abruptly came between the Prophet and :the writing of the epistle, according to al-Bukhari, who related the following

When the Prophet's pain worsened, he called our `Bring me material on which I can

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١- This question is raised in al-Murajaat between `Allamah Sharaf al-Din and Shaykh .(Salim al-Bashri (of Azhar Mosque

٢- Cf. Ibn Sa`d, al-Tabaqat al-kubra II:٢٤٢-٤٤ (Beirut: Tab`at Beirut lil-Tiba`ah, ١٩٨٥).

write you my epistle; after this you shall never stray. `Umar then said, The Prophet is overcome with pain, but we [still] have the Qur'an. We count on God's Book." They agreed and became more clamorous. The Prophet said, "Leave! Quarreling in ry house is inappropriate." Ibn `Abbas then left saying(۱) 'What a calamity has come between the Prophet and his epistle...(۲)

It may be appropriate here to recall a dialogue, related by Ibn `Abbas, between 'Umar b. al-Khattab (earlier during his Caliphate) and himself. Its gist is as follows. `Umar asks him,

"O `Abd Allah, you will pay in blood, if you keep silent ... Does `Ali have any outstanding issue concerning the Caliphate?" "Yes," I replied. So `Umar said, "There was only convulsed speech, which cannot establish an argument nor dispel a difficulty ...In his state of illness, [the Prophet] wanted to announce [`Ali's] name, but I prevented that out of pity and concern for Islam Messenger of God knew what was in my mind and abstained ... (۳)

Whether this is true or not, Caliph `Umar's effort was subsequently confirmed on more than one occasion. It transpired that at one time as related by al-Tabari addressing Ibn `Abbas, he said "My people are loathe to have Prophethood and the Caliphate joined in thee..."(۴)

It appears that the Prophet's abandonment of the idea of writing and malting out a covenant had two aspects to it The first is that of the disagreement, quarreling and clamour that took place in his

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۱- Translator's emphasis.

۲- Sahih al-Bukhari I:۳۷ (q.v. "Kitab al ilm," Ch. "Kitab al al-ilm'; Cf. "Kitab al-I'tisam" (lithographed copy of printing by Dir al-`Amirah, Istanbul; Beirut. Dar al-Fikr).

۳- Ibn Abi al-Hadid, Sharh Nahj al-balaghah III:۹۷ (Cairo: Dar al-Kutub al`Arabiyyah al-Kubra).

۴- Ta'rikh al-Tabari II:۵۷۷ (Beirut: Dar al-Kutub al-`Ilmiyyah).

house just when he intended to write the covenant. This aspect was argued to the point where he was accused of blathering deliriously (in one version), or of being overcome with pain (in another version[1]). This is quite serious, since it touches the root of prophethood and the veracity of the Message. Yet the matter had been repeatedly clarified by the Prophet, as we saw. So, let the issue be examined on its own merits and let us make our choice.

Secondly, the Prophet had taken his precautions against just such an eventuality. He prepared the battalion headed by Usamah b. Zayd, and ordered its deployment, whatever the circumstances. So anxious was he to have it deployed, that by some accounts nothing could deflect his attention from it, not even the severity of his illness.[2]

Let us relate an account found in Ibn Sa`d's al-Tabaqat corroborating this. After mentioning the battalion's preparations, Ibn Sa`d relates how the illness struck the Prophet on a Wednesday, causing him to become feverish; when he awoke Thursday morning he gave the standard to Usamah and told him, "Go into battle in the Name of God and in His Path. Fight those who deny Him." So [the latter] went out standard in hand, under pledge, and gave it to Buraydah b. al-Hasib al Aslami.

He then camped at al Jurf, a place only three miles from Medina. Some Muhajirin and Ansar were with him, including Abu Bakr, `Umar and Abu Ubaydah. But people were asking, "Is

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۱- Ibn Athir, al-Nahayah fi gharib al-hadith wal-athar; ed. al-Tanahi V:۲۴۶ (q.v "Hajar").

۲- Ibn al-Athir, al-Kamil fi tarikh II:۲۱۸ (Dar Sadir).

he [i.e. the Prophet] installing this youth above the First Muhajiran?" This greatly .angered the Prophet, who put a headcloth around his head and climbed the pulpit

Now then, O People! What is this talk surrounding my appointment of Usamah as commander. You contcst his appointment now just as you did previously his father's. But by God, the latter was as fit to command then as his son surely is now! For me, he was one of the most beloved. Both are deserving of every kindness. So, make a point .of showing kindness to him, for he is one of the best among you

The Prophet then went to his house, on Saturday, ١٠ Rabi' al-Awwal, with the illness (growing worse. He gave order to "Carry out Usamah's deployment!"(١

From all these situations, words and course of events it appears the Prophet intended :the following

To adapt the intellectual and psychological climate by appointing Usamah as (١ commander over the Muhajiran and the Ansar. The latter's acceptance of him marked a precedent for 'Ali's own accession to the position of Guardian and Caliph. In this .manner, no one would object to his being younger than most

To adapt the political and security climate by preempting likely elements of (٢ opposition,(٢) in order for `Ali to acceded to the position of Caliph. This goal the Prophet was committed to and had planned with vigilance in the hope of bring it to .fruition, as we have shown

However, a different turn of events took place than the

١- Al-Tabaqat al-kubra II:٢۴٨-۵٠.

٢- Allamah `Abd Sharaf al-Din, al-Muraja`at, p. ۴٧٢`.

one intended. And so, he wished to lessen the Ummah's pains, to avoid the vagaries of trial and error. He wished for the Ummah to hold fast to the Holy Book and to the Immaculate Family in order to be saved from the wilderness and from perdition. Hence his abandonment of the idea of an absolute, definitively written convenant: so ,the Ummah may continue to be tested, which is the way of God. For God asks

Do men think they will be left alone on saying, `We have faith,' without being tested?" Those before them we have tested, and God shall know who believes, just as He shall .("know who denies" (Qur'an ٢٩:١-٣ "al-`Ankabut

God has willed all this, just as surely the Prophet had wished for the faithful to believe firmly in the one he appointed over them as his successor. Moreover, he intended their belief to be a reflective one and for their Shi'ism to be sincere - so as to continue to carry out the Divine Will under the latter's blessed leadership. The object is to :remove iniquity, sinfulness and unbelief from existence

God hath promised those of you who have faith and work rightful deeds that they will be made heirs on earth just as surely as those before them were made heirs; that He will consolidate the religion He countenanced for them; that He will surely change them after their fear - secure in [their] worship of Me, and without associating anything with Me. If any deny

("after this, they are the sinful. (Qur'an ۲۴:۵۵ "al-Nur

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p: ۹۸

About center

In the name of Allah

هَلْيَسْتَوِيالَّذِينَيَعْلَمُونَوَالَّذِينَلَايَعْلَمُونَ

?Are those who know equal to those who do not know

al-Zumar: ٩

:Introduction

Ghaemiyeh Computer Research Institute of Isfahan, from ٢٠٠٧, under the authority of Ayatollah Haj SayyedHasanFaqihImami (God blesses his soul), by sincere and daily efforts of university and seminary elites and sophisticated groups began its activities .in religious, cultural and scientific fields

:Manifesto

Ghaemiyeh Computer Research Institute of Isfahan in order to facilitate and accelerate the accessibility of researchers to the books and tools of research, in the field of Islamic science, and regarding the multiplicity and dispersion of active centers in this field

and numerous and inaccessible sources by a mere scientific intention and far from any kind of social, political, tribal and personal prejudices and currents, based on performing a project in the shape of (management of produced and published works from all Shia centers) tries to provide a rich and free collection of books and research papers for the experts, and helpful contents and discussions for the educated generation and all classes of people interested in reading, with various formats in the .cyberspace

:Our Goals are

(propagating the culture and teachings of Thaqalayn (Quran and Ahlulbayt p.b.u.t-

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replacing useful contents with useless ones in the cellphones, tablets and computers-

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acting according to the legal licenses-

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.It's obvious that all the responsibilities are due to the author

:Other activities of the institute

Publication of books, booklets and other editions-

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:Appreciation

We would appreciate the centers, institutes, publications, authors and all honorable .friends who contributed their help and data to us to reach the holy goal we follow

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